Politics — *American Style*

Despite their overlapping similarities, their blurred oppositions, their political motivations of self-interest rather than enlightened principle, the Republican and Democratic parties are "useful, effective, and altogether indispensable instruments of constitutional democracy." In this fascinating and thought-provoking book on the major parties, past, present, and future, Clinton Rossiter shows just how and why the American political system has remained one of the most vigorous and unique in the annals of history.

"Combining well the skills of both the historian and the political scientist, Rossiter analyzes the nature and organization of our parties. . . . Rossiter understands the nuances of our politics, he writes with perception and clarity, and he has produced a sensible, brief account for those at home and abroad who wish to understand democratic politics, American style."

—The Saturday Review

PARTIES *and* POLITICS *in* AMERICA

by Clinton Rossiter



A MENTOR BOOK

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To DAVID BUTLER

Friend of My Sons

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PARTIES and POLITICS in AMERICA

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and
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The Pattern of American Politics

NO America without democracy, no democracy without politics, no politics without parties, no parties without compromise and moderation So runs the string of assumptions on which hangs this exposition of the politics of American democracy

All but the first of these are assumptions with which many Americans find it hard to live For a people that invented the modern political party, we have been strangely reluctant to take pride in our handiwork My modest hope is that those who come to read this book with a skeptical attitude toward party politics will go away with a better understanding of the logic of our political system, and thus perhaps with more pride in it.

Perhaps they will also go away with a hunger to read further on the subject I can promise them happily that their stomachs will be filled Once upon a time the vast arena in which political parties struggle ceaselessly for power, and for "place, pelf, and patronage," was called "the dark continent of political science" If it ever was dark, it is no longer. "No force acting on mankind has

can politics is that we live under a persistent, obdurate, one might almost say *tyrannical*, two-party system. We have the Republicans and we have the Democrats, and we have almost no one else, no other strictly political aggregate that amounts to a corporal's guard in the struggle for power

The extent of this tyranny of the two parties is most dramatically revealed in the sorry condition of third parties in the United States today This may seem an odd way to begin an exposition of a two-party system, but often we can learn more about a pattern of social existence from a study of its deviants and outcasts than of its well-adjusted members So it is with our third parties, whose present situation is almost hopeless Whatever glories they may have known in the past, they have been faced for a generation by an almost complete monopoly of votes, attention, money, influence, and power by the two great parties In the presidential election of 1956 a score of third party candidates—among them Enoch Holtwick (Prohibition), Farrell Dobbs (Socialist Workers), Henry B Krajewski (American Third Party), and T Coleman Andrews (who ran under seven labels in nineteen states)—attracted considerably less than 1 per cent of the 62 million Americans who cast their votes In Congress, where once Progressives, Independents, and Farmer Laborites brightened the scene with the fireworks of nonconformity none but Democrats and Republicans now ply their trade In all the ninety-nine legislative chambers in the fifty states today (Nebraska is the "un-American" state with a unicameral legislature) there are exactly four men—four out of nearly 8 000—who can be identified as adherents of a third political force

To tell the truth, those 'past glories" were not really half so glorious as some dissident romantics would like us to believe The third parties have done their bit to keep American politics honest, principled, lively, and progressive but it is becoming increasingly hard to nod assent to those historians perhaps more warmhearted than cold-eyed who have proclaimed them "the truly *dynamic* elements in our political system" There is, for example, no conclusive evidence that the third parties have

Wallace Progressives of 1948 These, too, can be fitted into our pattern if we classify them as hybrids of two or more of the six categories I have mentioned.

Of all the scores of minor parties that have skipped fitfully across our political landscape, only one, the Populists seems in retrospect to have mounted a serious challenge to the hegemony of the two major parties If ever there was a third American party that might have grown into a major party, it was this party of Ignatius Donnelly Tom Watson, "Sockless Jerry" Simpson, and James B Weaver Yet the nomination of Bryan by the Democrats in 1896 smashed their dreams with one blow of the hammer, and the Populists proved how complete the wreckage was by hastening to nominate Bryan themselves[4] Perhaps they, too, were only a dissident wing and not a genuine party Their dissidence was momentous to be sure for it drove the Democrats at least five paces to the left We are nonetheless left with the thought that the excellent showing of the Populists in 1892 meant their destruction in 1896 One of the persistent qualities of the American two-party system is the way in which one of the major parties moves almost instinctively to absorb (and thus be somewhat reshaped by) the most challenging third party of the time In any case it is a notable fact that no third party in America has ever risen to become a major party, and that no major party has ever fallen to become a third party Every one of the four great parties in American history—Federalists, Democrats, Whigs, and Republicans—sprang full grown into the arena and began at once to compete seriously for the stakes of power The two parties that died—the Federalists and Whigs—died with few agonies and even fewer sentimental looks back over their shoulders It was a queer and lonely fellow indeed who proclaimed himself a Federalist in the Era of Good Feelings or a Whig in the Civil War Major parties do not decline in the United States at least not for long, they disappear without a trace If the multiparty pattern of French politics is unknown to American experience, so too, be it noted, is the two-party pattern of British politics under which in the course of forty years the Labour party grew from a

Texas, Vermont, Virginia—were engaged in almost pure one party politics, and that twelve—Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee—plodded along under a modified one-party system.[6] This is all very interesting and important, and one should never fail to mention it when describing our political pattern as a two-party structure; yet for us the paramount fact is that each one of the dominant parties in these twenty two states bears the label "Republican" or "Democratic." Each one *is a* citadel that can withstand the impact of even the most disastrous national landslide and thus provide elements of obstinacy and stability in the two-party pattern. In short, this deviation, too, works to strengthen rather than weaken the monopoly enjoyed by the Republicans and Democrats, and thus turns out to be perhaps no deviation at all.

Many learned men have written many pages—some wise as well as learned, some merely learned—in an attempt to account conclusively for the rise and persistence of our two-party system.[7] This is, plainly, one of those grand social phenomena about whose causes we cannot ever hope to secure universal agreement, and for once we should retreat with happy consciences into the fortress of multiple causation The two-party system got that way, let us be content to assert, because of a host of forces that group themselves conveniently under three headings·

Psychology There is a world of substance in Maurice Duverger's insistence that "the two-party system seems to correspond to the nature of things, that *is* to say that political choice usually takes the form of a choice between two alternatives A duality of parties does not always exist, but almost always there is a duality of tendencies "[8] The conditions of a freely functioning, democratic political community lead almost inevitably to a coalescing and hardening of the Ins and Outs, the Fors and Againsts and "some other forces must intervene to produce and sustain multiparty party systems "[9]

Sociology Those "other forces" have never been powerful enough in this country to splinter the two-party pat-

Communists were two too many for most persons in New York, and in 1947 the City beat a retreat to the single-member district. Results of the next election (1949): Democrats, 24, Republicans, 1—all of which proves that the single member district system may be hard on the second party but is death on third parties[11] As to the bipolarizing effects of a popularly chosen and powerful President, consider the lesson of the ill starred German Republic of 1919-1933 Elections to the Reichstag were conducted under an extreme system of proportional representation, which in the election of 1930 produced a full ten parties with nineteen or more seats in the legislature as well as a wild scatter of splinter delegations Elections to the Presidency were conducted under a system that turned the nation into one vast constituency, which in the election of 1932 forced all these scores of parties into three two coalitions and the Communists The two coalitions polled 90 per cent of the total popular vote of 36 million.

The two-party system will remain that way because of all the forces we have ticked off and two more that appear to be decisive First the whole American system of elections—electoral laws campaign practices, social customs—is loaded heavily against the rise of minor parties to even secondary nationwide influence The exorbitant costs of political campaigning, the statutory difficulties of getting on and staying on the ballot in many states, the legal status of the major parties as supervisors of elections—these are just a few of the roadblocks that lie in the path of any third party, no matter how strong its initial impetus or broad its purpose, that has a premonition of majority status Second the two-party system has become a vital principle of the American tradition "The two-party system" C A. Berdahl writes, "is so much a part of our governmental and political structure that it need not be argued, nor explained, nor even understood, it is, like the Constitution and the Monroe Doctrine, something we accept as a matter of course"[12]

This is the way we have always done things This, therefore, is the way we should always do them so runs the cast of our public mind as it contemplates the

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matters of ideology There are few places in the United States in which the Democrats and Republicans do not appeal forcefully and sincerely to every identifiable interest and group whether economic, social, racial, religious, or even ideological There are no interests and groups, certainly of a nationwide range which either party is prepared to write off in advance of a national election Our parties are noted among all parties in the world for their unforced hospitality to all manner of men For few Americans is membership in one of our major parties taken out or renewed with zeal, the parties respond to this situation by leaving their doors wide open. It would be hard to imagine a political association more *motley* than the Democratic party of the United States The Republicans for all their apparently sterner commitment to principle and respectability, are not much less of an army with a hundred different banners They, like the Democrats, are a vast enterprise in ' group diplomacy "

Third, the structure of American politics is marked by decentralization of authority and consequent enfeebling of discipline to an exaggerated degree Although the direction of this country's course seems to be pointed steadily toward a great magnet located somewhere in Washington—with the result that we are moving fitfully but inexorably toward more centralized, nationalized, uniform ways of doing the public business—the organizational pattern of the two major parties has thus far resisted the lure of this magnet obstinately The Democratic and Republican parties remain today, as they have been throughout their history loose confederacies of state parties Each of our one hundred state parties is an independent, self-sustaining sovereign force in the balance of political forces It would be unthinkable for the national leadership of one of the parties, even assuming that such a locus of power exists to dictate or veto candidates and policies of a state party It would be impossible, too, for each state party has its own sources of influence and support that permit it to exist indefinitely in defiance of the leaders of the national party

Each state party in its turn is decentralized extensively down to the city, county, town, and even precinct levels

"truncated pyramid" Below the line, where the state and local machines operate, "authority is real" Above it, where the national committee waves its impotent scepter, "there are visible only the transparent filaments of the ghost of a party"[13]

Perhaps the most striking bit of evidence of the feeble state of national party organization is the absence from the annals of American history of politicians who except for the special cases of two or three dominant, politically minded Presidents, can be classed as national leaders What man, even such a man as Mark Hanna, has ever come close to being a national boss? What man, even such a man as Charles E Hughes, has ever been able to raise his voice clearly as the spokesman of the party camped outside the White House? As Adlai Stevenson once said in his bittersweet way, could any Titular Leader be more "titular" than the defeated candidate in the most recent presidential election? Even our strong Presidents enjoyed a kind of political power that looked strong on its face but "perished in the twisting." * Think, for example of the dramatic political ascendancy of Franklin D Roosevelt—and of the mess he made of the Great Purge of 1938 Think too of Dwight D Eisenhower and his dreams of remaking the Republican party in the image of his moderate conservatism—and of his failure to remake even one Republican who was unwilling to be remade in the first place At the peak of his popularity, just before his crushing victory in the election of 1956, Mr Eisenhower demonstrated his own understanding of the limits to his political power set by the organizational pattern of the Republican party Questioned pointedly about the pose of Modern Republicanism struck by several "old guard" senators, the President replied

*The other side of this coin displays the interesting fact that such political leaders as Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, Woodrow Wilson Herbert Hoover Alfred E. Smith, Wendell Willkie Thomas E. Dewey and Franklin D Roosevelt never held an official party position. They were never entitled to "participate formally in the consideration and determination of questions of party policy strategy management or organization."[14]

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tion of this third point is the phenomenon of bossism.[11] This phenomenon, of course, is peculiarly American There is nothing quite like a Curley or Hague or Crump or even a De Sapio in other countries that have well-developed party systems. To be a real boss, and not just a flunky, a politician must have his own base of power and immunity from external discipline, if not from internal revolt. This is exactly what our bosses have—independence As the state bosses are independent of whatever national leadership there may be, so the local bosses are independent of them—and all are independent of one another Regional bosses are just as unknown to our political landscape as are national bosses The essence of the historic organizational pattern of American politics is caught in the battle cry of the Brooklyn Democrats of the 1890s as they rallied their forces to thwart another [illegible] ien of Tam- [illegible] The Tiger,

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It is a matter of some irony, and convincing proof of the point I am making to note that the presidential nominating convention the one truly national instrument of American politics, is little better than a happy, [illegible] e many [illegible] in the [illegible] a win- [illegible] perhaps more unity than one might expect of them They proceed in any case under their own power and at their own speed conscious to the end of how much more important they are to the party than the party is to them. When the convention is over they return to their principalities secure in the knowledge that their own positions of power depend only peripherally, or not at all, on the results of the presidential canvass They will, with few exceptions, work hard for the ticket and con-

*The importance of these men in the game of presidential politics is attested by the zeal with which candidates for nomination tour the country in search of their support. The road to nomination for the Presidency may lead through Washington, but it also leads through Topeka Sacramento Helena, Madison, Albany and a hundred other state and local bosses.

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It is a matter of some irony, and convincing proof of the point I am making, to note that the presidential nominating convention the one truly national instrument of American politics is little better than a happy, disorderly conclave of state and local bosses * The many bosses have come, like the few national figures in the convention with the common purpose of picking a winner, and they proceed toward this goal with perhaps more unity than one might expect of them. They proceed, in any case under their own power and at their own speed conscious to the end of how much more important they are to the party than the party is to them. When the convention is over they return to their principalities secure in the knowledge that their own positions of power depend only peripherally, or not at all, on the results of the presidential canvass They will, with few exceptions, work hard for the ticket and con-

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complain), "the legislative battle often degenerates into scuffles and skirmishes among minority groups" On questions of organization, tactics, committee assignments, and distribution of patronage, the parties act with precision and regularity On questions of taxation, veterans' benefits, farm subsidies, regulation of industry, civil rights, and defense, however, they often move as rabbles through the stages of the decision making process If we accept Julius Turner's definition of a party vote as one in which at least 90 per cent of the Democrats oppose 90 per cent of the Republicans,* we find that in the 1940's only 15 per cent of the roll calls in the House of Representatives were in this category In contrast, in the days of McKinley roughly half were party votes [13]

In a famous passage much loved and quoted by political scientists (with some reservations by this one), Schattschneider describes this characteristic of our politics

> The roll calls in the House and the Senate show that party votes are relatively rare On difficult questions, usually the most important questions, party lines are apt to break badly and a straight party vote, aligning one party against the other is the exception rather than the rule The vote is sometimes unanimous or nearly unanimous that is the parties are occasionally in substantial agreement. Often both parties split into approximately equal halves In this case the party alignment is zero At other times one party votes as a unit but is joined by a substantial fraction of the other Finally a predominant portion of one party may be opposed by a predominant portion of the other party while minorities, more or less numerous on each side cross party lines to join their opponents In general the last mentioned case is the nearest approximation to a party vote on an important issue likely to be encountered, aside from routine partisan business When all is said it remains true that the roll calls demonstrate that *the parties are unable to hold their lines in a controversial public issue when the pressure is on.*

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overriding sense of common principle Let us leave this point for the time being with the observation that our system of political values makes large room for the maverick strain. Party loyalty, on issues as opposed to persons, is not one of our favorite principles We pin the label of "hack" on the man who goes down the line We rouse to the cry of a legislator like Senator Borah, who, when chided by a constituent for opposing the party leadership on an important issue, replied indignantly "What would you have a Senator do? Sincerely represent his views however inadequate they may be, or act as an intellectual prostitute for some party organization?" This is the ethos of a political system in which the pressure of party loyalty even if the most important,[27] is only one of several kinds that work upon our decision makers in office

While we are on the subject of pressures, let us note briefly still another unique characteristic of the American political system—the intricate web of nonparty groups that surrounds infiltrates, and complements the two major parties.[28] There are many features that distinguish these groups from political parties, but the most important are methodological Like the parties they try to secure the enactment and to influence the execution of public policies, unlike them they do this without nominating candidates for office, without fighting election campaigns openly and purposefully, and without seeking to gain control of government. We call them "interest groups" when we are feeling clinical, "pressure groups" when we are feeling critical, and "lobbies" when we are watching them at work in our fifty-one capitals Whatever we call them we are aware that they swing an inordinate amount of power for good, not so-good, and evil over the decision makers in our legislatures, administrative branches, and—more often and influentially than we like to think—judiciaries Parties have no monopoly on the impulse of a nation to organize politically In all free countries men of common interests set up organizations outside of and in addition to the parties in order to grab

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of this strange complex of weak parties and strong interests They cannot resist these pressures if they are not protected by their masters in the legislature, and we already know how weak the position of the masters can be. Most administrators, so far as one can tell, would like more security and less adventure

I do not wish to give too exaggerated a picture of soft-handed parties, naked congressmen, and many-splendored interest groups Some congressmen find a large measure of independence in the very numbers of pressures that seek to force themselves upon them, many of which cancel one another out. Others have such a hold on their constituencies that they can safely ignore the pressures of hostile groups Some interest groups are decidedly unpopular with the voters of a particular district, and congressmen may make political capital out of a posture of defiance toward those that overreach themselves And all congressmen, indeed all legislators throughout the nation, learn soon enough that some of the most menacing interest groups are so partisan, so clearly "auxiliary organizations of one or the other party," [10] that they feel no pressure from these groups at all Either the legislator needs no persuasion to do their bidding, or they could no more persuade him than the other party could persuade him.

This tendency for interest groups to align themselves with one or the other of the major parties is a growing one, for more and more groups have found it less and less possible to remain neutral toward parties that are becoming more and more national in outlook and support. Once the process of partisan alienment has been set in motion it propels itself along at a quickening pace The sharpening commitment of many powerful unions to the Democratic party has forced many powerful trade associations to adopt a posture of only thinly veiled Republican partisanship The American Legion still walks proudly down both sides of the street, dishing out plums and turnips without much concern for the politics of each recipient, but the A F L -C I O the U S Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Public Power Association, and even the

tives of our major parties until we sense the peculiar spirit of American politics What I am speaking of here is the absence in our behavior, as a nation and as individuals, of a deep commitment to politics as a way of living and of doing the public business Some writers call this "apathy," others "indifference", I prefer words like inertia" and "offhandedness" and "resignation" In the words of this generation, which knows whereof it speaks, most Americans "play it cool" in the area of politics Whatever words we use to describe this phenomenon, it is an evident fact that Americans give less scope to politics, are less stirred by the rhetoric of politicians, and expect less from the political process than do Frenchmen or Belgians or Italians or even Canadians. Even at the height of a presidential campaign, when the air is purple with the promises and threats of a legion of orators, the political temperature of most Americans remains low and steady[22]

The first bit of evidence of the coolness of American politics is to be found in our attitudes toward political parties Few Americans give to the Democrats or Republicans the deep and encompassing allegiance claimed by parties like the Socialists in Belgium and the Nationalists in South Africa. Even the loose jointed Conservative and Labour parties of Britain look like armies of dedicated soldiers to the eye of an observer who has watched the ranks and files of the Republican and Democratic parties straggling across our political landscape An American party is not an army, not a church, not a way of life, not even a lodge It asks nothing of one of its adherents but his vote, a few dollars, and, if he seems willing a few hours of his time for manning the polls, licking stamps, and ringing doorbells and it would settle willingly for a sure vote There is little sense of "belonging" among American voters, few signs of "shared concern" with other men of like political mind Only a small fraction of the vast energies of the people is mobilized for party purposes Despite the pleas of a generation of civics teachers most Americans never perform a single act—other than registering or voting—that could be described as a service to a political party or candidate

cans could not care less Even the oligarchs, because of the feudal anarchy of the parties, are oligarchical only in small areas and about comparatively small things

A related aspect of this refusal of most Americans to be politically "engaged" is the high incidence of independence We are uniquely reluctant to acknowledge membership in a party, uniquely eager to change our minds, to cross lines, and to split tickets Thanks to the looseness of legal definitions of party affiliation, to the fact that most of us are called upon to vote several times a year, and to the multiplicity of choices to be made in any one election, we enjoy unusual opportunities to be inconstant and even wayward, and every study made of this subject in recent years confirms the suspicion, with which our politicians must live bravely, that we seize these opportunities gaily If ticket splitting is our privilege ticket splitting is our delight [27] So, too is changing our minds from one election to the next. It has been estimated that not more than 60 per cent of the American electorate is partisan and regular in its voting habits [28] We are seizing these opportunities, moreover, with increasing gaiety the habit of independence is growing upon us Issues and personalities have both become more important factors in the political calculations of American voters during the past generation. Party affiliations count a great deal less certainly in the races for the big stakes of power at the national level. In the words of the most experienced sleuth on the American political scene Samuel Lubell, the electorate "seems to have undergone a curious quickening of its voting reflexes" in the elections since 1948 It has become a great deal easier to shift the party allegiance of the American voter ' [29]

The chief result of this growth in independence (and of the persistence of old habits of ticket splitting) is the sight that never fails to bewilder strangers who choose to observe our antics from a safe distance the Presidency and thus several thousand top-level executive offices safe in the hands of one party, Congress safe in the hands of the other There is nothing in our history, to be sure, that can match the sharpness and persistence

cans could not care less Even the oligarchs, because of the feudal anarchy of the parties, are oligarchical only in small areas and about comparatively small things

A related aspect of this refusal of most Americans to be politically "engaged" is the high incidence of independence We are uniquely reluctant to acknowledge membership in a party, uniquely eager to change our minds, to cross lines and to split tickets Thanks to the looseness of legal definitions of party affiliation, to the fact that most of us are called upon to vote several times a year, and to the multiplicity of choices to be made in any one election, we enjoy unusual opportunities to be inconstant and even wayward, and every study made of this subject in recent years confirms the suspicion, with which our politicians must live bravely, that we seize these opportunities gaily If ticket splitting is our privilege, ticket splitting is our delight.[37] So, too is changing our minds from one election to the next. It has been estimated that not more than 60 per cent of the American electorate is partisan and regular in its voting habits [38] We are seizing these opportunities, moreover, with increasing gaiety the habit of independence is growing upon us Issues and personalities have both become more important factors in the political calculations of American voters during the past generation Party affiliations count a great deal less certainly in the races for the big stakes of power at the national level. In the words of the most experienced sleuth on the American political scene Samuel Lubell, the electorate "seems to have undergone a curious quickening of its voting reflexes" in the elections since 1948 It has become a great deal easier to shift the party allegiance of the American voter " [39]

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and worse than this percentage would lead us to conclude [40] On the credit side is the fact that, after a long dip in the graph of participation in presidential elections from 1896 to 1924, it has been inching upward painfully in recent years The following table may serve to illustrate both the long decline, which steepened sharply in 1920 when women were first given the vote and did not know quite what to do with it, and the recent rise, which was set back noticeably in the unsettled conditions of World War II

Year	*Percentage of adult citizenry voting*	*Year*	*Percentage of adult citizenry voting*
1896	79	1928	57
1900	74	1932	58
1904	66	1936	61
1908	66	1940	62
1912	60	1944	55
1916	63	1948	53
1920	49	1952	64
1924	49	1956	62

Also on the credit side is the variation in participation between the highest and lowest states The latter are national disgraces for which we can account but make no convincing apology The former are at least an even match for the countries with which we can be most reasonably compared—Britain, Canada, and France Here are the high and low percentages of the 1956 election

Idaho	80	Mississippi	22
Utah	78	South Carolina	25
Connecticut	78	Alabama	28
Massachusetts	77	Georgia	30
Rhode Island	76	Virginia	32
New Hampshire	76	Louisiana	35

To these figures should be appended the statistic that roughly 75 per cent of the electorate outside the South voted in 1952

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South For them the act of voting would have called for will power, energy, money, court assistance, or physical courage (and, in hundreds of thousands of cases, for all five) which they could not be expected to muster

Five million (give or take a few hundred thousand—these are admittedly crude figures) were unable to meet state, county, or precinct residence requirements They had moved too recently from one home to another, or they were men and women perpetually on the move, migrants and floaters with no permanent residence

Five million were unable to get themselves to the polls because of illness That may seem like a lot of sick people, but it is still only one in twenty of all adult Americans—and November is, after all, a virus laden month.

Two and a half million were away from home, on business or "monkey business," and would not or could not use absentee ballots

Two and a half million were unable to read and write and thus were ineligible (in 17 states) or unwilling to vote [41]

Six hundred thousand were in prisons, homes for the aged, and other institutions

Six hundred thousand were residents of the District of Columbia, a never never land of Americans who count as taxpayers but not as voters

Three hundred thousand were members of the armed forces who could not qualify for absentee ballots

This leaves a total of 15 5 million Americans who simply found it inconvenient—a good deal less inconvenient than it was for a Delta Negro or a bedridden centenarian—to go to the polls and that figure would doubtless rise to around 20 million if we were to account for the duplications in the list above Even if we allow for such disabilities as religious scruples and flat tires and agoraphobia we are left face to face with a staggering number of Americans who thought it quite unimportant to act the parts of responsible citizens of a great democracy In the off year 1958 this 15–20 million jumped to 30–35 million. If I may toss out two

solve our feelings of shame, let me note that the turnout for congressional elections in off years is far below the standard we set in presidential elections Here are some discouraging figures out of recent years

Year	*Percentage of adult citizenry voting*
1946	39
1950	42
1954	43
1958	44

It is sobering to realize that in 1946 the year in which we elected our first postwar Congress hardly one in three eligible Americans voted for their representatives We could make even these percentages look good if we were to go into the subject of local elections, but we have enough evidence already of American apathy and inertia to satisfy us for one chapter of one small book Let us note simply that in defiance of the most solemn dictates of the democratic ideology Americans lose rather than gain interest steadily as their electoral obligations move closer to home Elections to those offices that are closest to home where the issues are immediate and the candidates known generally attract only a tiny percentage of the voting population In many a village in upstate New York the turnout for the presidential election of 1956 was better than 85 per cent in the local elections of 1955 and 1957 less than 10 per cent.

Who are the Americans who do not vote and why don t they? Let me try to answer these questions in slightly more concrete terms than the abstract figures in which we have thus far been dealing

In 1956 roughly 100 million Americans could conceivably have voted in the presidential election Just over 62 million did which means that 38 million did not. Now, according to the most generous estimate 22 5 million could have come up with one or more of the following explanations of their failure to vote

Six million were trapped in the political mores of the

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difference, fear, principle, or total lack of motivation. But such persons, surely, are no more numerous in the United States than in Canada or Britain or Italy What, then, are the special disabilities that frustrate broader participation even in states like New York or Massachusetts? I would put my finger on three reasons for our record. The first is the fact that our Constitution, laws, and electoral practices put an unusual number of technical difficulties in the path of the would-be voter [44] Under our federal pattern of government the states are primarily responsible for setting the conditions of the suffrage, and few of them have done anything to make it easier for us to qualify and vote If we, like many other countries, had a national voting list, permanent or easy registration, a short ballot, a national holiday on election day, and, to sweeten the appeal, a small tax exemption for those who cast their votes we too might get an 85 per cent turnout (at least outside the South) every four years.

A second reason, of indeterminate but visible influence, is the two party system There is little doubt that many voters see nothing to choose between the Tweedledumism of the Democrats and Tweedledeeism of the Republicans Lacking any third choice, they fail to choose at all An interesting variation on the accepted pattern of nonvoting behavior was recorded by Lubell and others in the 1952 elections There seem to have been a sizable number of Americans whom indecision rather than indifference or cynicism kept from the polls. Many nonvoters were anything but apathetic They followed the campaign closely indeed much too closely, for they apparently ended up paralyzed by the desire to vote for both candidates They abstained from voting, not because they disliked Eisenhower and Stevenson, but rather because they liked them both so much that they could not make a choice that would leave one of them out in the cold Thereby they proved a point that students of [illegible]

that " [illegible]

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as a profession even remotely as attractive and important as medicine or law or teaching (or advertising) Lacking respect for politics as a calling, we assume that its ethical standards are bound to be depressed. Honesty in business is one thing and revelations of corruption come as a shock Honesty in politics is another, and revelations of corruption make us yawn Old Simon Cameron, we would agree, had the truth by the tail when he defined an "honest politician as "a man who, when he s bought, stays bought"

Like any observer of the political scene, I feel a strong temptation to moralize over the fact that most Amer icans are side liners or even absentees in the great game of politics For the time being I am going to resist the temptation and confine myself to the single observation that both our moralizings about nonparticipation and our attempts to stimulate interest would make more sense if they were based on the realities of American democracy This is one dark area in which we could use a lot more light. We need more leads like David Riesman's precocious insight about the "new style indifferents"

> This apathy of the great majority is not the classic, quiescent indifference of the tradition-directed. It is to a large degree the indifference of people who know enough about politics to reject it, enough about political information to refuse it enough about their political responsibilities as citizens to evade them.[43]

We need more careful studies like that of Woodward and Roper, which produced Table 1

Finally, we must take note of the paradoxical fact that the weakness of our electoral performance is a strange sign of the strength of our democracy A free man goes to the polls because he is motivated to do so, and surely some part of his motivation arises out of the assumption that the results of the election will make a difference in his life The plain fact is that, quite apart from the dampening effects of two-party politics, the results of elections make less of a difference in the lives of Americans than they do, let us say, in the lives of Frenchmen or Italians or South Africans For this reason if for no other, political motivation is relatively low in America. Since we expect less from politics, we give less to it Since we have confidence that the next election will take place on schedule, we find it harder to get excited about the current election—and so, of course, do our friends in Britain and Canada[41] When ballots become bullets, Americans will be found casting them (or firing them) as willingly as any other people.

A final ingredient of the peculiar spirit of American *politics is the strong antipolitical bias that crops up in* our folklore Parties as institutions and politicians as people both rank low in our scale of values Politics is sin, and politicians if not sinners are pretty suspicious fellows Every study of the 1952 election shows that Eisenhower picked up a decisive bundle of votes among people (many of them incidentally chronic nonvoters) who rejoiced in a candidate said to be "clean of politics" or "above politics" or "not a politician at all" In a country in which parties have played an essential role for more than 150 years many of us have not moved one inch beyond the fears and prejudices of the Farewell Address in which Washington warned us solemnly against "the baneful effects of the spirit of party" In a country in which politicians have been the brokers of democracy, many of us would rather have our sons be anything—even "bookies" or jingle writers—than professional Democrats or Republicans Again despite the efforts of civics teachers and ex-Presidents and public spirited men of Madison Avenue, we are unwilling to look upon politics

These, then, appear to be the major characteristics of the American political system (1) the persistence and ascendancy of the two-party scheme, (2) the hard times of minor parties devoted to narrow gauge interests or broad scale reform (3) the loose, supple, interest-directed, principle shunning coalition forming nature of the two major parties (4) the decentralization of authority in the organization of these parties in the country at large, (5) the absence of effective discipline in the organization of these parties within the government, (6) the encirclement and penetration of the parties by a vigorous array of interest groups, and (7) the generally low key, independent, skeptical approach of most Americans to the business of politics There are other characteristics one could mention—venerability, moderation pragmatism conservatism—but they will emerge in due course in the chapters to come Enough has been said already to make the main point with conviction Nowhere in the world not even in the nightmares of our friendly critics from abroad is there a pattern of politics anything like ours

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II

The Functions of American Parties

PARTIES, it could be argued, exist primarily to serve the interests of the men who lead or support them. They are justified by their fruits, by which I mean the fruits that are showered on the leaders in the form of power and on the supporters in the form of favors. This, however, is a crude and narrow view of the role of parties in our society, for whatever they may have been in their beginnings, parties are now public institutions rather than private preserves. They stand closer to Congress and the courts than they do, say, to the American Legion or General Motors or the AFL-CIO on the spectrum of social organization that runs from the very private to the totally official. They are justified by their functions, by which I mean functions that are performed as services to the entire nation. We tolerate and even celebrate their existence because they do things for us in the public realm that would otherwise be done poorly or not at all.

Let us turn now to look at our parties in this light. Let us describe the political and social functions of any

party in any democracy, and see how well our particular parties have performed each of these functions in our peculiar democracy Let us see, too, if there are any special, "characteristically American" functions that they have been called upon to perform or, more accurately, have performed without knowing it Then perhaps we will be in a position to pass meaningful judgment on the quality of service rendered by the American party system to the American people

The primary function of a political party in a democracy such as ours is to control and direct the struggle for power From this function all others derive naturally[1] I trust that no apologies need be made for calling attention to the fact that the political process in a free country is essentially a conflict, limited and regularized but nonetheless relentless, among groups of men who have contradictory interests and more or less mutually exclusive hopes of securing them. In the coming day of the golden utopia of communism, so Marx and Khrushchev have both promised us, there will be enough of everything to go all the way around—from crepes suzette to psychological security by way of shoes and vitamins and love Until that day however, we will all be living in societies where there is a scarcity of the things that can be won by collective action, where, for instance, rich men cannot have low taxes and poor men free medical care at the same time The struggle for political power, and for the privileges and immunities that political power can be made to produce, will go forward without rest, even in Khrushchev's coming society

It is one of the aspirations of democracy to bring this struggle as much as possible into the open It is the great purpose of political parties, the handmaidens of democracy to bring the struggle under control to institutionalize it with organization, to channel it through nominations and elections, to publicize it by means of platforms and appeals above all to stabilize it in the form of that traditional quadrille in which the Ins and the Outs change places from time to time on a signal

qualified candidate for election as President or assemblyman or county coroner

There are, of course, other techniques for recruiting men and women into the service of the community. The machinery of election is vigorously nonpartisan in two states and many cities in the United States, and the machinery appears to work fairly well. In the case of nominations for local office a caucus of all interested citizens is often the most sensible method of narrowing the field. And it is hard to deny that we could push the line dividing partisan from career appointments in, let us say, the diplomatic service well up the ladder with no injury to efficiency or team-mindedness. Yet this is the way we have chosen to do this important job, and there is much to be said for the choice of agents we have made—the major parties. They bring order out of disorder, simplicity out of diversity, precision out of chaos. They comb the population for willing and (more often than legend would have it) able recruits, and, by placing their tags upon these aspirants for election or appointment, they help us all, even in a country where tags can sometimes be misleading, to make more rational choices.

How would we ever get through the process of electing a Congress if the parties did not take over the primaries and elections? How would the President ever find candidates for several thousand offices a year if his party's informal patronage machinery were not quick with suggestions? How would we go about filling the 750,000 (give or take 100,000) elective offices in the United States if we were a strictly nonpartisan people? If we do not get as many first-rate men as we should in Congress and the administration, in state legislatures and school boards, the blame must be laid at the doors of the people with their antipolitical mores and not of the politicians with their vulgar methods. The latter, after all, stay in business by pleasing the former, and up to now they seem to have pleased us well enough. This, in any case, is the wonderfully symbiotic relationship that we, like all other democracies, have created. The process of nomination and election needs parties to make

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tentions, have never been noted for originality or clarity One cannot fail to be impressed by some of the reports of the Democratic Advisory Council or by the Report of the Republican Committee on Program and Progress *Decisions for a Better America*, issued in Septembe 1959 yet one is struck by the scarcity of concrete pro posals in all these reports and bound to wonder if the members of these committees really speak with the voice of authority Yet the remembrance of Wilson's New Freedom and Roosevelt s New Deal should be enough to convince us that parties can originate policies and that their policies unlike those of most interest groups, can cut a broad swath through American life Wilson and especially Roosevelt took their policies wherever they found them, but some of the most important were first given form by lieutenants acting consciously as Democrats

The point at which our parties may indeed have failed us in this matter of policies is not in originating or formulating or advertising them but in converting them into the hard coin of purposeful law and skillful administration Before we can go into that problem, however, we must take note of the function that makes it possible and even mandatory for parties in a democracy to put their policies into effect the organization and operation of government Within every true party there exists as I pointed out in Chapter I, a governmental party a hard core of officeholders whose duty to the community goes beyond mere electioneering or even formulating policies If this party has been victorious in the most recent election it is expected to organize the legislative and executive branches and to run them with the aid of the appeals and disciplines of party loyalty In the United States of course the ground rules of the Constitution make it necessary for a party to win several elections over a period of time in order to exercise the kind of over all control that comes in one large bundle to the majority party (or coalition) under the rules of the parliamentary system but in all democratic countries the principle is the same every self respecting party is, in effect a miniature state that must be prepared to

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government. Yet even in America we would be at a loss how to get on with the public business if the parties were not always around begging us to lease them the concession.

If we have few complaints about the technical competence with which our majority parties organize and operate the agencies of government, we have many, probably more than any other people in the democratic world, about the skill and dedication they bring to the process of making their own policies the policies of city or state or nation and that, as I have already indicated, is one of the basic functions of a party in a democracy to make concrete promises to the electorate and then, if invited by the electorate to govern, to make good on those promises There are promises and promises, to be sure, and the imperatives of democracy demand that a major shift in public policy be carried through only by a clear majority in answer to a clear invitation. Yet if this function is not the essence of party government, what is? If parties will not take the lead in making policy for the community what groups will? In the ideal democracy it could be argued responsible parties would exercise command, if never enjoy a monopoly of the process of decision making We would always know whom to punish for unkept promises and wrong guesses

No country comes close to being an ideal democracy, and, in this instance at least, America does not come close at all. American parties are notoriously delinquent in keeping their promises to the electorate We have become especially skeptical about the capacity of the majority party in Congress no matter how smashing its most recent electoral triumph, to build new structures of law and administration out of the planks in its platform To tell the truth most of us do not find this skepticism hard to bear and the complaints are voiced more in sorrow than in anger The fact is that we have never been as willing as the British or Swedes or Belgians or even the Canadians to consign to partisan hands the great process of decision making for the nation We seem to be happier with decisions that have been adopted on a bipartisan or even better nonpartisan basis,

of power than in it. Like the great Constitution under which we live serenely, our political instinct seems to prefer restraint to power and delay to action. The minority, finding its role more congenial than does the majority, performs it with a relish that is usually missing in the activities of the governing party. The framers of the Constitution were concerned, on one hand, to construct a system of checks and balances and, on the other, to make it difficult for parties to arise and prosper. *Would they be shocked or merely surprised to learn* that one of the most effective checks in our enduring system of checks and balances is the party in opposition, and that it is, moreover, the kind of check these loyal Newtonians liked best of all—fluid, kinetic, and, in the words of John Adams, opposing "power to power, force to force, strength to strength, interest to interest, as well as reason to reason, eloquence to eloquence, passion to passion"?

To this list of the political functions of parties in a democracy we can add three others that might more accurately be described as social, since in performing them parties serve men in their roles as social rather than political animals. First, parties are important agencies in the educational process. The citizens of a free country must be instructed in the practices of democracy and kept informed on the issues of their times, not merely to become more forceful agents of public opinion and more skillful voters, but also to live more satisfying lives. Once they have finished the last stage of their formal education, they must rely on a battery of informal instruments ranging from Sunday afternoon television to word of mouth. Political parties are at best crude instruments of adult education, yet they can do much to compel study and discussion of important problems.

American parties have given over perhaps too much of their own responsibility for adult education to interest groups, yet our history is full of instances in which a party took the lead in educating the public to recognize and understand the facts of a new condition or trend in

of power than in it. Like the great Constitution under which we live serenely, our political instinct seems to prefer restraint to power and delay to action. The minority, finding its role more congenial than does the majority, performs it with a relish that is usually missing in the activities of the governing party The framers of the Constitution were concerned, on one hand, to construct a system of checks and balances and, on the other, to make it difficult for parties to arise and prosper Would they be shocked or merely surprised to learn that one of the most effective checks in our enduring system of checks and balances is the party in opposition, and that *it is, moreover,* the kind of check *these* loyal Newtonians liked best of all—fluid, kinetic, and, in the words of John Adams, opposing "power to power, force to force, strength to strength, interest to interest, as well as reason to reason, eloquence to eloquence, passion to passion"?

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American parties have given over perhaps too much of their own responsibility for adult education to interest groups, yet our history is full of instances in which a party took the lead in educating the public to recognize and understand the facts of a new condition or trend in

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American life The Republican party, speaking through men like Lincoln did much to educate the nation in the true nature and implications of slavery The Democratic party, speaking through Franklin Roosevelt and his friends, did even more to educate us in the proper relations of private enterprise and public authority Third parties, too, although their student bodies have been limited have scored real successes as educating agencies The parties could certainly afford to do a great deal more in performing this function especially in stimulating interest in politics The 'seminars and 'schools' now being run every year in several parts of the country could be multiplied many times over to the benefit of American minds and American democracy Even these present modest efforts are welcome additions to the vast jerry built structure of adult education The citizen who goes to school cautiously with our political parties can get an excellent education in subjects that really count

Next, the parties serve a useful social purpose in acting as buffers and adjusters between individuals and society, especially as the latter intrudes into the lives of ordinary persons in the shape of impersonal political authority [7] The days are pretty well over when big and little bosses did much (for a consideration, to be sure) to soften the impact of the city on the sensibilities of helpless and ignorant people—when Nocky Johnson of Atlantic City kept a pile of coal to which any poor Negro could come for a free bagful when George Washington Plunkitt handed out jobs along with free advice, when Frank Skeffington (or was it James Curley, or Spencer Tracy?) acted the part of the bountiful city squire, when Walter Lippmann doubted that the City of New York could ever be 'as human as kindly, as jolly as Tammany Hall , [8] and when Martin Lomasney of Boston spoke for all the old machines 'I think that there's got to be in every ward somebody that any bloke can come to—no matter what he's done—and get help Help, none of your law and justice, *but help* ' [9]

Yet the parties are still important dispensers of those aids favors and immunities (for example from prosecution of father for peddling without a

·aking windows) that make it possible for men and m-n to live reasonably confident lives in a harsh en·ronment. If poor Negroes in Atlantic City no longer ed to be given coal, they do need help in obtaining employment compensation with which to buy coal. he more penetrating and complicated the power of overnment becomes, the more demand there is for illed "adjusters," who might as well be politicians as riests or social workers There is, of course, a seamy ide to this function politicians contribute more than heir fair share to the corruptions and injustices of Am-rican life, in the country as well as in the city Yet h- fact that a function is performed corruptly is no decisive argument against its being performed in the first place Men need buffers against both state and society, and they must take them as and where they find them In the local organizations of political parties Americans h.ve found buffers of uncommon efficiency The lives of millions of Americans would have been much harder to bear if the parties had not done their work as agencies of social welfare

Finally parties serve a symbolic function—or should we start from the other direction and call it psychological?—by providing an object, large and friendly and often exciting, to which men can extend allegiance Graham Wallas in his memorable study of *Human Nature in Politics* was perhaps the first observer to isolate and examine this function. Having taken note of the multitude of voters and of the psychical inability of any one voter to deal with more than a few men and ideas, he went on Something is required simpler and more permanent, something which can be loved and trusted, and which can be recognized at successive elections as being the same thing that was loved and trusted before, and a party is such a thing [16]

I have said already that parties in America are not churches Let me amend that observation by suggesting that for many Americans the party is like a church, but on the Unitarian rather than the Catholic mod-l, that is, a church that makes few demands and exercises no discipline In the words of Professors Merriam and Gosnell

story I cannot linger to give a full accounting of these reasons, but I can suggest the main areas into which we would have to go exploring for them.

We would have to look first at the *Constitution*, which has had (and must continue to have) a far more powerful influence on the style of our politics and shape of our parties than many political scientists oriented to psychology and sociology would have us believe. Almost every command, prohibition, or arrangement in this document has helped to dictate the direction in which our parties have developed. The division of power and even of sovereignty between nation and states is a major cause of decentralization in the parties. This fact of federalism, strengthened by the physical separation of the legislature and the executive, makes a mockery of all hopes for strong party discipline. The method of electing congressmen and even more obviously, the *President* dooms the first two parties to lives of incessant compromise and all other parties to frustration. The Presidency itself, at once the most political and least political of offices, cuts across the neat lines of party responsibility. And the whole spirit of the Constitution, a document that remains even today a catalogue of limitations, insists so strongly that many decisions of a public character be taken by private persons and agencies that it is no wonder our parties are encouraged to be all things to all men in many areas of controversy.

Behind the Constitution stand the American people, and surely we would have to look next at their assumptions, myths, and prejudices for an explanation of the peculiar quality of American parties. I realize that I am skating on thin ice. I am highly suspicious myself of writers who attribute an attitude or trait to an entire people. Still there are generalizations that are demonstrably truer of the minds of a random sample of Americans than those of a similar sample of Britons or Austrians or Peruvians, and some of these generalizations are full of implications for our parties. We are said to be a people with a prejudice against politics, and that may explain why our parties tolerate so many mavericks, men who claim to be "Americans first and party men second," ev[illegible] front ranks. We are said to be a

a far different and in my opinion, unhappier country, I they would be far different and, in the opinion of writers happier parties The point for us to keep mind is that their willingness to take on these historic ctions has had a profound impact on their structures, nciples, and methods In order to serve the American ople in the capacities I am about to describe, the rties have had to eschew discipline, suppress doctrine, d fragment power

To put the matter as simply as possible, they are e parties they are today because they have played a tal role in creating the unity of America. They are eak agents in the struggle for power because they ave been strong agents in the course of our rise to ationhood. It has been their historic mission to hold he line against some of the most powerful centrifugal orces in American society and their success in performing it can be measured with considerable accuracy n their peculiar habits No one should pass judgment on American parties until he understands that fact and has reviewed the whole record of their achievements. Let us now move on with our own review by taking careful note of the contributions our major parties have made to national unity in checking the forces of disunity

The first of these forces is sectionalism, which lies so deep in the American way of life and has exerted such an attraction on American minds and passions that the wonder is we are one country at all and not a parcel of squabbling Balkan states We were by no means destined to become one nation extending its claims to allegiance over all the land between Canada and Mexico and between the two great oceans The Union got off to a shaky start it was challenged boldly in the nineteenth century by every section of the country in turn, several sections seem to have been at perpetual odds with it. One section indeed as we will never be allowed to forget, made an agonizing attempt to break loose completely, and only the force of arms kept the eleven Southern states in the Union—or as some prefer, brought them back into it.

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To put the matter as simply as possible, they are the parties they are today because they have played a vital role in creating the unity of America They are weak agents in the struggle for power because they have been strong agents in the course of our rise to nationhood. It has been their historic mission to hold the line against some of the most powerful centrifugal forces in American society, and their success in performing it can be measured with considerable accuracy in their peculiar habits No one should pass judgment on American parties until he understands that fact and has reviewed the whole record of their achievements Let us now move on with our own review by taking careful note of the contributions our major parties have made to national unity in checking the forces of disunity

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in the South in 1866 and 1868, the Democrats did more to restore the Union than did any other group or force in or out of power To round out this revealing story of disunion and union, we might recall that the parties brought off the famous deal of 1877 that cemented the South politically in the Union In return for an agreement by the Democrats not to challenge the shaky results of the election of 1876, the Republicans promised to withdraw federal troops from the South [13] This was a classic demonstration of the whole process I have been describing. The motives were impure and the purposes selfish, the methods of decision were not those we write about so glibly in our tracts and texts on democracy Yet there can be no doubt that the chief object of benefaction was the American Union Men all through our history have proclaimed with fervor that there are things more important than the Union In the full perspective of our history however I am not sure what they are

Let me clinch this point with the help of one of the few non-American writers who seem to know what American politics is all about Putting his finger eloquently on the great political lesson of the Civil War, Denis Brogan writes

> It can hardly be doubted that the immediate cause of the greatest breakdown of the American political system was the breakdown of the party system the failure of the party machinery and the party leaders to remember their national function which if carried out, was the justification of the varied weakness and absurdities of the party organizations and policies Not until the party system broke down in the dissolution of the Whigs, in the schism of the Democrats was war possible
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d ne much to smother is the explosive power latent in the scrambled pattern of race, national origin, and religion. Almost every identifiable cultural group in American society has found a happier political home in one party than in the other At least one major group in one part of the country, the Negroes in the South, has been fought off savagely by one of the parties, the Democrats Still the broad scheme of American politics has been one under which neither party could afford to write off any sizable group and under which most groups have divided evenly enough between the parties to create an illusion, and perhaps more than just an illusion of unity amid diversity Most of the particulars of this historic process are too well known to require extended comment how millions of immigrants were given their first hearty welcome by a local boss, how the Democrats made good Americans out of Irishmen and the Republicans made equally good Americans out of Germans how thousands of men shut off by a wall of prejudice from other paths to higher status made their way up the dizzy escalator of politics how men of different tongues learned to speak the common language of politics how Negroes in the North made progress in politics much faster than in any other area, how the parties tiptoed around the divisive issues of religion and thus gave them no chance to explode Again one must confess that the picture is not all that pleasant. There is always something a little hard to swallow in the party ticket listing an upstate old stock Protestant for governor a downstate Irish Catholic for lieutenant governor a suburban Jew for attorney general a large-city Italian for secretary of state and a small-city Pole for comptroller but if this kind of enterprise is one of the few to bring men of such diverse backgrounds together—and to invite each of their followings to cast a highly tolerant ballot—who can argue that the higher good of democratic unity has not been served, however casually and perversely?

In all these ways and in many more the parties have softened the rough edges of America s fabulous diversity They have paid a stiff price in the coin of

a political democracy because the parties pressed hard if not continuously for an expansion of the suffrage and of popular participation in the decision making process. I repeat Political parties and democracy are inseparable phenomena. The surge toward democracy first gave life to parties as we know them, and parties in their turn were major spurs to the onward course of democracy It would, indeed, be hard to decide which was the chicken and which the egg here in America.

The democratizing influence of the parties has been visited with particular force on the Constitution The Constitution did much to shape the parties, but they have given back almost as much as they have got. Schattschneider, in a brilliant metaphor, writes of the parties as "the river of American politics, the stream of the living impulse to govern," and of the Constitution as "the river bed, the firm land whose contour shapes the stream." The river is 'the prisoner of the land' through which it flows, but in the long run" it "can transform the landscape " [11]

Our parties have transformed the constitutional landscape primarily by broadening the base of American politics For one thing they have altered the whole system of electing the President The nominating convention the far ranging campaign the popular vote, the general ticket system, the elimination of independent choice in the electoral college—all these and other party-inspired devices have converted the decentralized, non-political, dignified system of election planned by the framers into the fabulous plebiscite that is today our leading national ritual and all things considered, a remarkably effective procedure for choosing an able man to lead us For another the parties have democratized the selective as well as the elective process Their impact on the President's constitutional power of appointment has been incalculable Admittedly there was nothing polite about the spoils system—a party device if ever there was one—but its introduction in the early nineteenth century opened up the seats of power to men in all walks of life and made our government a far more popular affair. We let the parties push the use of this

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nonpartisan and bipartisan affair in which the Democratic platform of 1932 and Democratic candidates of 1928 and 1932 played catalytic parts

Amendment XXII (forbidding third terms), a controversial addition indeed, was primarily a product of Republican partisanship

The parties have also added their bit to the rise of the Presidency to a dominant if hardly dominating position in our scheme of government By democratizing the procedure of election, they have helped to make it an essentially popular office By inviting the President to serve as the grand sachem of the party that has elected him, they have given him new weapons of persuasion over the administration, Congress, and the people at large And by confusing and delaying the process of policy making in Congress, they have unwittingly thrown upon him more authority to make policy himself than even a modernized system of the separation of powers would logically assign to him The President, in a word, should be grateful to the parties

So perhaps should all of us who are interested in making our Constitution an instrument of effective government It has not been an easy constitution with which to make policy quickly and to govern efficiently, which is exactly the kind of constitution the framers intended it to be The gaps that separate the executive from the legislature the national government from the states, and the states from each other have often been as discouraging to men of good will as to men of corrupt intent As we have often been told this emphasis on restraint and delay was all very well in the eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries but the twentieth century, the world of automation and atomic energy, is another kind of world one in which we are as likely to be destroyed by a vacuum of power as by an overdose of it For this reason we need more, and more easily traveled bridges across these gaps, and our major parties provide two that we could hardly afford to be without The simple fact that the President, roughly half of Congress and roughly half of the state governors are all brothers in the same political lodge is one that

world of politics a system designed by accident or providence to delay, check, and frustrate the ill digested plans of men while permitting them to govern in a responsible and popular manner The two-party system works to lengthen the delays built into the constitutional process It is not the stubborn presence of the minority party but the opportunistic give and take of both parties that is the great auxiliary check and balance in the American pattern of free government It was not to use political power imaginatively and purposefully in order to make society that we called our parties into being but render the mechanics of government more comprehensible and efficient It was not the use but the abuse f power with which we were first of all concerned, and e agreed almost instinctively to adopt a political system that would make both more difficult.

Up to now at least we have had little reason to omplain of the pattern of political compromise worked out by history to serve our peculiar ends If the struggle for power has not been disciplined it has also not been exacerbated If our parties have not governed enough they have also not governed too much They have helped to build a nation out of the scourings of a half hundred nations a union out of the scuffle of sectional and local urges They have helped to make a difficult Constitution work far more smoothly than its framers had any right to expect Over the long span of American history they have done few things we did not want them to do and done most things we wanted them to do Like the public schools of America, the parties must be judged finally as institutions called upon by history to go far beyond their precise mission. The schools have had to do more than educate, the parties have had to do more than govern

The more one contemplates our political history, the more certain it seems that *these* parties were designed prescriptively to serve the purposes of *this* people under the terms of *this* Constitution. They are the natural fruits of a unique way of life The politics they play is thus a unique politics It is not the politics of democracy

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III

Democrats and Republicans Who Are They?

THE party struggle has been kicking up the dust on the American scene for more than a century and a half It was brought to life by the clash of interests in the first years under the Constitution took form in the elections of 1796 1798 and 1800 and, except for that unique pause for breath known as the Era of Good Feelings has been pursued without rest down to this day—whence it will be pursued without further rest so long as his country is governed on principles of constitutional democracy

Some historians following the lead of John Adams, place the emergence of parties much farther back in the course of American history "You say 'our divisions began with federalism and anti federalism,'" Adams wrote to William Keteltas in 1812 "Alas! they began with human nature they have existed in America from its first plantation In every colony, divisions always prevailed In New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Massachu-

better understanding of the present state and future prospects of American democracy by examining our political parties with a critical eye When I say "political parties" I do not mean a series of abstract agglomerates floating about in the heavenly city of political theory I mean a pair of real parties, visible entities with legal status, organization, records, and bank accounts, that have dominated our political landscape since 1856 and have now moved beyond mere domination to a point where they may be said to "hog" it I mean the Democratic party and the Republican party, each of which I propose to examine in the course of the next three chapters in terms of (1) current strength, (2) origin and development, (3) achievements and failures, (4) demography, that is, the patterns of class, section, religion, and national origin one finds in each, (5) the image that each has of itself, (6) the image that each has of the other, (7) style, if we may use that word to describe the discernible character displayed by each party as it goes about its business, (8) principles and policies, and (9) future prospects In the hands of these parties we have placed a great deal of responsibility for the conduct of our public business, and they deserve to be better known One would almost think that there had been a conspiracy of ignorance among the citizens of the United States, so little do we know that is certain—and so much do we know that is wrong—about our two durable parties.

In undertaking this examination of the parties, we must be reasonably clear about which of their several faces we are observing at any given time The title "Democratic party" or "Republican party" can be used interchangeably to denote one of five fairly distinguishable human groupings whether at the national, state, or local level, or at all three together

The *governmental party* those who have been elected or appointed to office under the party's label (most visible in the legislature)

The *organization* those who give all or a sizable part of their lives to manning and managing the extragovern-

orders universities, churches, or companies have existed in unbroken course as long as this amazing political organism. It is exactly as old as the American party system, which means that it is by all odds the oldest full bodied party in the world The Democrats were a party in every sense of the word when the Whigs and Tories were still clusters of leader-oriented factions or simply political tendencies in the British Parliament

If it is the oldest of political parties, it is also the toughest. In the course of 160-odd years its death by explosion or attrition has been foretold a dozen times, and still it plods and occasionally skips along the path of political destiny It plods and skips, be it noted, with considerable success, indeed, its present condition must be described as "flourishing" The compelling fact of American politics today is that the Democratic party is the majority party * The majority is an uneasy one, especially at the point where the South joins suspicious hands with Northern unions and city machines, and it can win victories far more easily than it can do anything with them. Still it is a majority All other things being equal which they are more often than not on the vast, self adjusting scale of American politics, the Democrats should win every nationwide election Even when the high volatility of the electorate is taken into full account, the solid Democratic bulge is plainly visible Well over 60 per cent of American voters who register under a party label are registered as Democrats, well over 55 per cent intend to vote Democratic if they can Elmo Roper's estimate of normal voting affiliation," which was arrived at through use of the best techniques that opinion research can muster, gives 50 per cent to the Democrats 34 per cent to the Republicans, and 16 per cent to the ranks of genuine independence A more finely shaded analysis of party identification reveals the interesting figures of Table 2

The majority status of the Democrats shows up clearly in the breakdown of offices currently held by the two parties The Democrats have an edge of 283 to 154 in the House of Representatives, 65 to 35 in the Senate,

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of Ham-lton's ...

... opinion about the permissiveness and centripetal force of the new Constitution, the Democratic Republicans were a tendency (the "Republican Interest") in the country from the very beginning, an identifiable group in Congress by 1792, a governmental party by 1795, an election fighting alliance by 1796, and a visible if loose nationwide organization by 1800[6] The importance of personality, then as now a mighty force in our politics, can hardly be overestimated Jefferson, whether reluctant as in 1794-1795 or eager as in 1797-1800, was the kind of leader around whom men, legends, and victorious combinations form and flourish.[7] Madison, whose vital role in the political maneuverings of this decade is just now coming to be fully appreciated,[8] was the skillful architect of the governmental party Men such as William Branch Giles and Albert Gallatin wrung the last ounce of partisan usefulness out of Jay's Treaty Men such as Wilson Cary Nicholas and John Breckinridge did the same with the Alien and Sedition Acts And men such as Aaron Burr John Beckley Philip Freneau, George Clinton, James Hutchinson, C ... roe John Francis M... to build the scatte[red] ... local groupings into ... a historic victory in 1800

The most remarkable thing about the birth of the Democratic Republicans was the way in which, in anticipation of future generations of Democratic politicians, a party was put together out of discordant interests that were prepared to submerge their differences for the sake of victory over an enemy whom they all disliked even more intensely than they disliked each other *The clasping of hands between* Thomas Jefferson, leader of the rural, agrarian South and Aaron Burr, leader of the urban laboring North was an event of immense consequence for the future of American politics The bargains they struck both explicit and implicit, are still the chartered articles of the Democratic party To maintain

happy parties was captured by the largest of its components, and emerged from its ordeal as the tough confident, self-conscious legatee of the political Jefferson All things considered especially the shattering effects of this age of rapid transition upon all the nation s values and habits the new Democracy was a remarkably faithful projection of the old which was what such skilled makers as Martin Van Buren and Thomas Hart Benton intended it to be

The Democratic party, born anew if not born again, moved forward from 1830 to become and remain the most powerful single political force in American history Like all institutions and all men, it has had its ups and downs It has known glory under such as Andrew Jackson and Franklin D Roosevelt, greatness under such as James K. Polk and Harry S Truman mediocrity under such as Franklin Pierce and Alton B Parker frustration under such as Martin Van Buren and Grover Cleveland, despair under such as Stephen A Douglas and James M. Cox. It has scraped the stars with Woodrow Wilson and Adlai Stevenson it has wallowed in the mud with William Marcy Tweed, Edward H Crump and Theodore ("The Man) Bilbo It has displayed shrewdness and stupidity farsightedness and blindness courage and cowardice moral fiber and amoral callousness It has shocked the fastidious discomfited the established comforted the disinherited and amused the detached It has been in short an American party operating at full blast on the American scene

If we can rise above petty detail and see our history in broadest outline we can give the Democratic party more than modest praise for at least nine grand achievements more than pardonable blame for five grand failures These are of course in addition to the triumphs (or failures) for which we give credit (or blame) to the whole party system that is to the two old parties in fairly equal amounts The achievements of the Democrats by which I mean Good Things that happened to the United States because they initiated them or pushed them or at least speeded their inevitable coming were (1) the easy acceptance of the ground rules of the Con-

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The obverse of the compelling fact of American politics is that the Republican party is the minority party All other things being equal, which they were in 1954 and 1958 and were not in 1952 and 1956, the Republicans should lose every nationwide election. They are the party upon which that solid Democratic bulge presses constantly They cannot register more than 40 per cent of American voters and cannot count on more than 33 per cent to stand fast against temptation They are outnumbered ...

... to 3 in the lower houses and 8 to 5 in the governors' mansions They took a fearful licking in 1958, they have few substantial hopes of capturing the House and one of capturing the Senate in 1960 And yet their spirits are high and their minds full of plans for they have the one wonderful thing the Democrats lack—the Presidency It would be hard to overestimate the immense satisfaction the Republican party draws from the sight of one of its own men in the White House, where none but scheming spendthrift wrongheaded Democrats" lived for the twenty long years' from 1933 to 1953 Dwight D Eisenhower has been many things to the Republicans—a world renowned leader, a popular idol (the first such Republican since Theodore Roosevelt), a benevolent father image a willing dispenser of patronage a peacemaker among the party's squabbling wings—but most of all he has been a winner, and a winner is what a minority party must have from time to time lest it sink into a state of demoralized torpor The mere presence of Eisenhower in the White House is enough to smother the Republican party's own special urge to fly apart and more than enough to inspire its faithful workers to move into the battle of 1960 with quick and confident step If the party can win the Presidency at least half the time why cry over the House of Representatives and a handful of state governorships?

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in January 1854 with his introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and consequent reopening of the slavery issue and within a few months the Whigs had disappeared as an effective force in American politics. Within the same few months two new forces had emerged—one, the nativist Know-Nothing party, which contested the elections of 1854 and 1856 and then, happily, disappeared, the other, the Republican party, which also contested these elections and then, happily, went on to glory in 1860.

There are four facts about the birth and infancy of the Republican party which it is essential for us to have in mind. First, this party was the product of a truly spontaneous eruption of political sentiment. No one town can be called its birthplace although both Ripon, Wisconsin, and Jackson, Michigan, have cases worth shouting about. No one man served as the real or symbolic catalyst of the forces that went into it. It had no Washington or Jefferson, no Madison or Hamilton, no Clay or Jackson. It was, indeed, the most powerful authentic grass-roots movement in American political history. Second, that sentiment was essentially sectional in origin and appeal. By making their first stand a bold one against the extension of slavery in the territories, the Republicans, in effect, tossed away the South, and to this day they live with the knowledge that they have never been a fully national party. Third, that sentiment was essentially progressive, democratic, even radical, the party itself was based as much on ideals as on interests. Whatever the Republicans were to become in later years, they were far from being a conservative, business-oriented party in infancy. The very name Republican was a salute to the Jeffersonian heritage, and Washington and Jefferson ("the first Free Soiler") were the only two patron saints acclaimed in the party's first platform. (In these same years the name of Jefferson was conspicuously absent from Democratic platforms.) Finally, the Republicans drew their leaders and gathered their voters from almost every party and group on the American scene—from the Whigs, yes, but also from the Democrats, Free-Soilers, Abolitionists, Know-Nothings, local third parties,

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: Republican party, the second time (1916) by the ın of Wilson's prominent teeth The golden age of the :publicans was inaugurated in Warren G Harding's ntastic victory in 1920, the dark ages in Herbert oover's demoralizing defeat in 1932 That defeat was ll another watershed in American politics, for Frank- n Roosevelt seized the main chance offered him by his- ry and put together the new coalition that holds sway, recarious but consequential, to this day For nearly urty years the Republicans have been, in Samuel Lubell's etaphor the moon in orbit around the Democratic un.[17] At one point, indeed the moon was in virtual clipse From the election of 1936 the Republicans emerged with 8 votes out of 531 in the electoral college, 17 seats out of 96 in the Senate 89 seats out of 435 in the House, and 8 governors out of 48 in the states Yet despite widespread predictions of an early death, the Republicans—thanks to a hard core of like minded interests, to state parties that would not lie down and die, to the visible cracks in the Roosevelt majority, and to the memories of better days—rose again to wage stern battle in 1940, a winning battle in 1946, and an all-winning campaign in 1952 The Republicans, it seems, are here to stay

Those memories bark back to seventy-five years of service to the nation through service principally to its productive classes Once again I speak subjectively and yet as the interpreter of scholarly consensus when I list these as the grand achievements of the Republican party. (1) the creation after the two aborted attempts of the Federalists and Whigs of a legitimate, viable alternative to the enduring Democracy (2) the forcing of the slavery issue which had to be forced sooner or later if America was to live in good conscience among the civilized nations of the world (3) the preservation of the Union, which was a historic enough achievement all by itself to justify the Republicans for generations to come, (4) the fertilization (if that is the proper word) of American enterprise in the late nineteenth century, and (5) the acceptance, none too soon but also not too late,

A party is something more than an organization or a legend or a record It is a multitude of people, and if it cannot count them in the millions it is not a party of any consequence on the American scene We must now talk of the Democrats and Republicans as people, millions of people In particular, we must take honest account of the historic tendency of Americans to swear allegiance to one party or to the other on the basis of such factors as section, race, and class, and of the historic tendency of one party or the other to grant easier access to power and privilege to those men who bear the right sectional, racial, and class credentials

This is, let us be forewarned, a tricky approach to the study of American politics To speak of "the Irish vote" or "the farm vote" or even "the egghead vote" is to speak of real individuals as an abstract mass, and thus to fall easy prey to misleading assumptions about the workings of our democracy It is to foster the illusion of great blocs of voters standing fast in the ancient ways or swinging massively from one party to another, to minimize the importance of personal choice and prejudice in the political process and to skim over the stubborn fact that any one American appears in at least a dozen different guises in the neat tables of statistics with which political demographers like to play Martin O'Toole of Boston, Massachusetts, may be both a self-conscious Irishman and a self-conscious Democrat, but how can we be sure that there is a one-to-one relationship between his descent and his politics, especially when we know that he is also fifty years old, a male, a college graduate, a Roman Catholic a New Englander, an urban dweller a homeowner, a self-employed businessman, a veteran a Rotarian and the son of a father who, out of gnawing dislike of his in laws the O Shaughnessys, always voted Republican? And how in any case, are we to establish his allegiance especially when we learn that he split his ticket in 1952 and again in 1956? Where is a man most likely to exhibit his true political colors in presidential congressional state or local elections? Some of the best studies in political demography in recent years are gently misleading, for the interviews from which they

al and complacent majority party, a determined and aimless minority party (with almost a vested interest in defeat), and a political life diminished equally by apathy and petty corruption.[12] In the midst of all this the urges and prejudices of sectionalism were the first concern of all leading politicians.

In politics as in most other areas of American life the trend in recent years has been away from sectional variety and (by way, paradoxically, of the growth of new varieties) toward national unity. Elections to the Presidency or Congress "are increasingly won and lost by influences felt throughout the land."[13] The Democrats can now make a real contest of every important election in every state of the Union. The Republicans, though cut off by memory and vested interest from the courthouses and statehouses of the old Confederacy, have at least the outlines of a "presidential party" in most of those eleven states.

Yet section is still a force in American national politics and a key to the political habits of large groups of persons who might otherwise be expected to vote the other way.[14] The South is still solid for the Democracy in local, state, and congressional elections, and it would like to be solid in presidential elections. Northern New England, the Western Reserve, and the upper Mississippi Valley are still more Republican than Democratic, southern New England, the Far West (except Oregon), and the Border (for example, Kentucky and Oklahoma) are more Democratic than Republican. And that wonder of American politics, the "mountain Republicans" of the South, are still very much a footnote to all tables of statistics that demonstrate the solidarity of that section. If one wishes to walk among the stanchest Republicans in America, let him turn away from Orange County in Vermont or Westchester County in New York and go to Owsley and Jackson counties in Kentucky, Sevier and Johnson counties in Tennessee, Mitchell County in North Carolina, Winston County in Alabama, and Gillespie and Kendall counties in Texas. Here he will find the sons and grandsons of men who detested the Confederacy, here he will find majorities (for instance, in Jackson

Table 4 A Profile of Class Solidarity[33]

	Per cent Republican		
	1936	1948	1952
New York			
Vote in city	24	35	44
Nearby suburbs	54	66	69
Philadelphia			
Vote in city	37	48	41
Nearby suburbs	52	64	63
Cleveland			
Vote in city	30	35	40
Nearby suburbs	54	62	63
Chicago			
Vote in city	33	41	45
Nearby suburbs	50	64	66
Los Angeles			
Vote in city	28	42	52
Nearby suburbs	36	51	59

"A profile of class solidarity"—that seems like a rather harsh title for Lubell to paste on Table 4 Harsh, yes, but also honest, for there can be little doubt that the sharpening urban suburban cleavage in our mid-century politics is a product of difference in status rather than in residence or tradition *Class* is a dirty word in the American vocabulary, yet to deny the existence of well-defined social classes in this country would be dishonest, to deny their importance for politics would be fatuous The fact is that class has now become the most important single force in shaping the political behavior of Americans and that, consequently class is the most reliable single index to political allegiance Again I am oversimplifying the dimensions of one force and ignoring the influence of many others including personal choice based on rational principles but it is well understood that the higher is a man's perch on the many staged, well traveled ladder of the American class structure, the more likely is he to be a Republican—and a conscious, committed, voting, contributing Republican at that This has been true of our politics I might add, for a long time James Bryce noted in the 1880 s that the Republicans were

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own class level and that most men recognize the Republicans as the party of the upper and upper middle classes and the Democrats as the party of the lower and lower-middle classes.[26] The short title for the former classes is "the rich," for the latter "the poor."

The increasing political importance of class position, whether objectively occupied or subjectively perceived, is demonstrated convincingly in the South. Most of the influences with which we are dealing in this chapter work only ineffectually in the South, blunted as they are by the overpowering impact of sectionalism on the whole political process. Class, however, appears to tell, not merely in the shaping of factions to contest for ascendancy within the Democracy, but in the creation of what was, in effect, a two-party South in the presidential elections of 1952 and 1956. Most of the votes for Eisenhower were polled in the upper reaches of the social order, most of those for Stevenson in the lower reaches, both white and colored. Lubell reported his own discovery of this cleavage in tables such as Tables 5, 6, and 7.

Table 5 Percentage for Eisenhower by Economic Class[27]

City	Negro precincts	Labor precincts	Silk-stocking precincts
Mobile, Ala.	11	34	72
Jacksonville, Fla.	13	28	79
Miami, Fla.	24	56	78
Tampa, Fla.	21	49	62
Atlanta, Ga.	25	28	67
Augusta, Ga.	23	40	75
New Orleans, La.	10	56	73
Baton Rouge, La.	5	36	64
Greensboro, N.C.	7	44	64
Charlotte, N.C.	7	39	82
Houston, Tex.	5	37	87
Dallas, Tex.	10	44	85
Richmond, Va.	15	43	75
13-city average	12	39	75

what to do without the sprinkling of aristocrats—men of manners, education, old wealth, and perhaps bad consciences—who tone up the party, keep it out of debt, and provide candidates for the Presidency The evil day of the class struggle in politics is still remote in most parts of America.

Calling is in most senses just another word for class, yet it, too, can be isolated and treated as an influence on political allegiance In the light of what we know already, it should come as no surprise to learn that most businessmen whether large or small, are Republicans, most workingmen whether organized or unorganized, are Democrats, and most farmers, whether in wheat or corn, are Republicans who will vote Democratic at the drop of a parity check

If the Republican party may be said to have a center of gravity it is today as it has been since the 1860 s, the business community the men who manage advise, supervise finance, and sell the products of American industry The Republican party is many parties but first of all it is "the party of business and businessmen and their allies rally to its support with a consistency that is rare in American politics A *Fortune* sponsored inquiry into the presidential preferences of 1 700 business executives in October 1959 revealed 76 per cent for Nixon, 11 per cent for Rockefeller and a shriveled 13 per cent willing to support any of the available Democrats Outside the South, and even inside it for presidential elections, the Republicans can usually count on the votes of roughly 85 per cent of top management 75 per cent of middle management and 65 per cent of independent businessmen At the top of the heap they can count on dollars, too as Table 8 proves

If some of our large corporations had their way, the businessmen who serve them would rally to Republicanism with fervor as well as with consistency There has been much talk in recent years of the importance of "political action on the part of corporation executives, especially those in the ranks of middle management The talk in public is necessarily neutral in tone, but there is no doubt that the action called for is action on the

workingmen than businessmen in America, but Republicans are able to live cheerfully with this fact because of three considerations the three workers in ten who always vote Republican and the added one who can be persuaded, the failure of the Democrats to reach many wives and relatives of union men, and the generally lower turnout of workers as opposed to businessmen.

The historic allegiance of American farmers is to the Republican party "Iowa will go Democratic," Senator Dolliver once promised, "the year Hell goes Methodist." His promise was made fifty years ago however, and Iowa has gone Democratic (if not Hell Methodist) more often than not since 1932, with the help of many farmers whose fathers were straight-out Republicans That historic allegiance may never quite recover from the shock and strain of the 1930s Two-party politics is here to stay in parts of America where for generations a Republican was "the thing to be' This two-party cleavage it appears, is almost as much a matter of status and substance as it is in the cities and suburbs, and the cleavage exists in the small towns as well as in the open spaces of rural America.* The most notable fact about the so-called "farm vote" today is not that it is a two-party vote or that it still leans slightly toward the Republicans but that increasing numbers of farmers are suspended in the independent middle ready to move one way or the other with the prevailing wind—or would it be against it? [24] The farmers of America, who have more to get directly from government than does any other major group in the country except the Negroes are generally credited these days with a special capacity for deliberate, rational choice of candidates As they have more to get, so they seem to get more and one reason must surely be their political restlessness Coyness is often paid off as well as loyalty in the American political system.

* Lubell has called attention to the fact that, in Iowa at least, "the mainstay of Republican strength in the countryside" may have been "the small town which serviced the farmer" rather than the farmer himself "the man on Main Street rather than the man with the hoe" [25]

true today than a generation ago, and it is becoming less true all the time [33] The urge of most immigrants has been to be accepted as Americans, and acceptance has meant Republicanism, often from the start, for millions of immigrants and their children The Irish, in particular, have been moving rapidly toward two-party politics based on variations in class and locale, although one would never suspect it as he ran his eye down the long list of Irish names in the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee Roper came up with these revealing figures in a survey of the political preferences of voters of Irish descent in the 1952 election [34]

	Eisenhower	*Stevenson*
Upper income	85%	15%
Lower middle income	55	45
Low income	29	71

The Italians on the other hand, are perhaps more Democrat [illegible]
Boston [illegible]
dependence [illegible] partly out of dislike of the Irish. Whatever else he may be Carmine De Sapio is a [illegible]

Farleys and Fitzgeralds in the command posts of many of the great city machines The Democrats of Chicago, the party of "Hinky Dink" Kenna and "Bath House John" Coughlin had a leader named Jake Arvey even before the Democrats of Manhattan the party of "Big Tim" Sullivan and "Blue eyed Billy" Sheehan, had their De Sapio When the Democrats of Boston the party of "the Purple Shamrock" and "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald, put their destiny in the hands of Casimir Pulaski that, as the sports writers say will be "the end of an era."

The two most interesting ethnic groups in American politics today are the Jews and the Negroes both of which used to vote Republican, both of which now lean heavily—the latter almost too heavily—toward the

as which the drama entitled "A Catholic in the White House" has settled down for a long run The Republi-

[illegible]

[illegible]ouse, but he will have to [illegible]

[illegible] is still more likely to choose to be a Democrat, a Protestant more likely to choose to be a Republican.

To this review of the great historic influences on political behavior and allegiance of Americans—section, locale, class, calling, ethnology, and religion—we should add a few words on three other influences that appear to work more subtly but no less effectively upon us all: age, education, and sex I have already called attention to the effect of these influences on political activity by observing that middle-aged people are more active than young people, educated people than uneducated, and men than women. The *interesting* point for us to consider is that, in terms of age and *education* allegiance to Republicanism appears to blossom side by side with activity as we move up the scale Every test of the electorate that has been run in recent years shows that the older or more educated a person is the more likely he is to vote Republican (and the more likely he is to vote at all), the younger or less educated he is the more likely he is to vote Democratic (and the less likely he is to vote at all)

Just why this double barreled fact should be true is not entirely clear A stronger allegiance to the Democrats among young people is explained partly but not merely by the suspicions of Republican economics that the new generation has imbibed A stronger allegiance to the Republicans among well-educated people is explained partly but not entirely by the fact that education and well being tend to go hand in-hand The fact, in any case, is well established, and I think it can be

in which the drama entitled "A Catholic in the White House?" has settled down for a long run The Republicans, it is safe to say, are many years away from booking this play into their own theater (They may, ironically, be the first party to have a Catholic President in the White House, but he will have to *come in through* the back door of the Vice Presidency) And we are many years [illegible]

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To descend from abstract history to the concrete present, one may say first of all that, except in a few fossilized pockets of prejudice, religion is no longer an obdurate bar to Americans wishing to switch allegiance from one party to the other. Millions still find it easier to vote for candidates of their own religion, and hundreds of thousands—who knows how many?—find it impossible to vote for candidates of another religion, but both parties now appear as respectable, tolerant havens for men of all faiths. The past, to be sure, dies hard. Although religion is a less powerful influence than it was, let us say, in the 1840's or 1920's, it continues to have a visible if only roughly measurable effect. The assumptions and prejudices we have inherited continue to work in a muffled, furtive way. The pattern of the past was, of course, that outside the South the Democrats were a predominantly Roman Catholic (because predominantly immigrant) party, and that almost everywhere the Republicans were a predominantly Protestant (because predominantly old stock) party. Even in the most biased and fearful times there were many Catholic Republicans and even more Protestant Democrats, but in many states and cities the cleavage between Democrats and Republicans was at bottom the old rivalry between Catholicism and Protestantism or, to be [illegible] honest, between Catholicism and anti-Catholicism. The influence of this cleavage has been documented many times over in stories of Catholic industrialists who felt ill at ease among Protestant Republicans, of distressed Scandinavian farmers who could not make the transit from the Republicans to the Democrats and dropped off at the way station of third party pol[illegible] [illegible]d ladies who were thrilled by Grover Cleveland or Woodrow Wilson but could not bring themselves to vote the Romanist ticket."

The pattern of the past persists and, although fainter in outline, shows few signs of disappearing. The Democratic party remains more Catholic than Protestant in style and personnel, the Republican party more Protestant than Catholic in memory and appeal. It is not an accident that the Democrats have furnished the theater

which the drama entitled "A Catholic in the White ouse?" has settled down for a long run. [illegible] [illegible] come in through the back oor of the Vice Presidency.) And we are many years way from a political system in which religion has nothing o do with the choice of a party. All other things being qual a Roman Catholic is still more likely to choose to e a Democrat, a Protestant more likely to choose to be Republican.

To this review of the great historic influences on political behavior and allegiance of Americans—section, locale, class calling ethnology and religion—we should add a few words on three other influences that appear to work more subtly but no less effectively upon us all: age, education, and sex. I have already called attention to the effect of these influences on political activity by observing that middle aged people are more active than young people, educated people than uneducated, and men than women. The interesting point for us to *consider* is that in terms of *age* and *education* allegiance to Republicanism appears to blossom side by side with activity as we move up the scale. Every test of the electorate that has been run in recent years shows that the older or more educated a person is the more likely he is to vote Republican (and the more likely *he is to* vote at all), the younger or less educated he is the more likely he is to vote Democratic (and the less likely he is to vote at all).

Just why this double barreled fact should be true is not entirely clear. A stronger allegiance to the Democrats among young people is explained partly but not entirely by the suspicions of Republican economics that the new generation has imbibed. A stronger allegiance to the Republicans among well-educated people is explained partly but not entirely by the fact *that* education and well being tend *to* go hand in-hand. The fact, in any case, is well established, and I think it can be

gaged in esthetic or intellectual pursuits The journals of America may be owned by Republicans, but they are largely written by Democrats (In the light of the overwhelming support given by the newspapers of the country to Eisenhower, it is obviously more important to own than to write) The "egghead vote" in America is not a large one, but for what it is worth it is heavily Democratic It does not go in much for organization, it likes to maintain an air of independence Yet when the time approaches to go to the polls, most intellectuals come down hard on the side of the field where the memory of Franklin D Roosevelt is still fresh and appealing That memory, strengthened by the mutual antipathy of professors and businessmen, will keep them voting Democratic for years to come

Sex is not quite so obvious or decisive a factor as is age or education in determining long-range allegiance, yet it does count in a small way What evidence we have suggests two things that women are becoming more active and independent (of their husbands, that is) as the years since 1919 pass by, and that they are slightly, but only slightly more willing to vote Republican than men, apparently out of a sharper fear of inflationary prices Sex can be more of a factor in triggering the occasional switch in which Americans like to indulge. Women appear to be more easily moved than men by candidates of the other party who generate unusual "sex appeal," whatever that is So long as more candidates are men than women, so long, I suppose, will women appear more politically fickle [47]

When all these elements of American political demography have been reported and weighed, one that I have not even mentioned will still loom up as the most important single determinant of all, and that, of course, is *inheritance* which in its turn is the vehicle for the kind of traditionalism that maintains "little enclaves of Democrats in New Hampshire who trace their political ancestry back" to a love for Andrew Jackson and little enclaves of Republicans in Alabama who trace theirs back to a dislike of Jefferson Davis [48] The family example and the family tie are as powerful forces in our poli-

more than of imperatives Both parties can still claim to be all things to all men.

Above all, we must be careful to pay homage to American individualism As we travel over the political landscape we may come across the perfect demographic Democrat—a poor, young, unionized, Roman Catholic, second generation, unskilled laborer named Grabowski with an eighth-grade education and a lumpy bed in Buffalo—and find that he votes the straight Republican ticket, or the perfect demographic Republican—a well-to-do, middle aged, salaried, Protestant, seventh-generation, top-management executive named Hoover with a college degree and a lovely home in Scarsdale—and find that he votes Democratic and, in addition, throws in $500 a year The Republicans will be happy to have Grabowski's vote, the Democrats will invite Hoover to sit at the head table at the Jefferson Jackson day dinner, and political demographers will be reminded once again [illegible]

Plainly this is a good thing for American democracy.

lecture I had given in that country, no matter what the subject. It had been put to me a thousand times in my own country There is no doubt that it is a perplexing and fascinating question, and I recognize my clear duty to answer it in all the fine and loving detail it deserves. My answer, I fear, will prove unsatisfactory to many, because in some important respects there is and can be no real difference between the Democrats and the Republicans, because the unwritten laws of American politics demand that the parties overlap substantially in principle, policy, character, appeal, and purpose—or cease to be parties with any hope of winning a national election. Yet if there are necessary similarities between the Democrats and the Republicans, there are also necessary differences, and we must have them clearly in mind before we can say that we understand the politics of American democracy *

The parties themselves—the leaders, organizers, propagandists, and "card carriers" of our two enduring coalitions—seem to have a number of differences clearly in their minds, or should I say firmly in their viscera? Emo-

*The classic statement of the point of view that there is no real difference between the parties was made by Bryce in *The American Commonwealth*

> There are now two great and several minor parties in the United States The great parties are the Republicans and the Democrats. What are their principles, their distinctive tenets, their tendencies? Which of them is for free trade, for civil service reform, for a spirited foreign policy for the regulation of telegraphs by legislation for a national bankrupt law for changes in the currency for any other of the twenty issues, which one hears discussed in the country as seriously involving its welfare?
> This is what a European is always asking of intelligent Republicans and intelligent Democrats He is always asking because he never gets an answer The replies leave him in deeper perplexity After some months the truth begins to dawn upon him. Neither party has anything definite to say on these issues; neither party has any principles, any distinctive tenets. Both have traditions. Both claim to have tendencies Both have certainly war cries, organizations, interests enlisted in their support. But those interests are in the main the interests of getting or keeping the patronage of the government. Tenets and policies, points of political doctrine and points of political practice, have all but vanished. They have not been thrown away but have been stripped away by Time and the progress of events fulfilling some policies, blotting out others. All has been lost, except office or the hope of it.[1]

of Clement Vallandigham in the 1860's, it was the party of Alger Hiss in the 1940's "Not all Democrats were rebels," Republican orators shouted as they "waved the bloody shirt" after the Civil War, "but all rebels were Democrats" "Not all Democrats were pinks and subversives," I heard a Republican remark just the other day, "but all pinks and subversives were Democrats—and they still are"

And as it was the party of the Boston Irish in the 1850's, it is the party of the New York Puerto Ricans in the 1960's This is the last and most repelling element in the total image of the Democratic party held by many good Republicans it speaks with an accent, it is not quite American, it is just not respectable And if the accent of the Pole or the Jew or the Puerto Rican is music to the friendly ears of other, perhaps more broad minded Republicans, there is always the accent of the Southern racist to remind them to stay put in the ranks behind Lincoln and McKinley

This is, admittedly a harsh image, not all of whose harshness can be explained as a simple corrective reaction to the pretensions of the Democrats themselves. It is not an image fortunately on which many Republicans dwell obsessively or most Republicans are prepared to act. In the real world of politics lawmaking and administration it presents no insurmountable barrier to the bipartisan jockeying and co-operation that makes our system livable and workable The image is there, nonetheless, carried sturdily in millions of Republican bosoms, and it is perhaps a more important force in the total pattern of our politics than the positive image carried by the Democrats themselves The latter does not forbid loyal Democrats to go off the reservation, the former makes it an act of heresy for loyal Republicans to embrace the sweaty Democrats

Let that be the essential image of the Democratic party in which both Democrats and Republicans put stock It is indeed a sweaty army—heavy with the sweet sweat of toil for the American people, according to the Democrats themselves, reeking with the sour sweat of

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longs to all Americans indeed to all men of good will everywhere in the world, but he belongs first of all to the Republicans He is an essential myth without whom no Republican orator or organizer or platform writer would know just how to proceed It is possible that Dwight D Eisenhower is a similar myth in the making.

The *Fact Book* makes this short, happy statement of "Republican Principles," and catches almost perfectly the feeling millions of Republicans have about their party

> The Republican Party was originated in 1854 as the political group dedicated to the freedom of the individual and the safeguard of his inalienable rights It has since remained steadfastly devoted to these basic American principles—free initiative free enterprise, and the dignity of the average man More than ever the deep significance of the Republican stand for Constitutionalism, States Rights encouragement of American enterprise and a minimum of Government interference with freedom of opportunity becomes apparent today when the extent to which these principles have been whittled down by the Democrat Party is realized

Here is the essence of true Republicanism, even in these days of the modern domesticated, politely New Dealish party individualism as opposed to collectivism, free enterprise as opposed to "socialistic meddling," constitutionalism as opposed to "one man rule," states' rights as opposed to centralization It is indeed, the party of "the American Way of Life It took the lead in building the Way it has defended it patriotically against subversion and radicalism it is in a real sense, the Way Incarnate I do not mean this at all facetiously when I say that the average Republican is much readier than the average Democrat to identify his own party with the nation and it household gods—home, mother, the flag, and free enterprise

A final ingredient in the Republican self image is the warm feeling of respectability that characterizes the record principles operations and tone of the party It is businesslike without being coldly professional, sound with-

constructive step toward leadership of the free world? Who are they to shout the glories of free enterprise when they have always banked so heavily on the government for friendly support of their schemes? Who are they to strike a posture of purity and wag their finger at the corruption of the city machines when they took favors from this government—protective tariffs, subsidies, land grants—that were worth billions rather than millions? The Republicans may rejoice in the memory of Lincoln, but if Lincoln were here today he would have a hard time warming to a single man in Eisenhower's Cabinet.

The essence of the Democratic image of the Republican party is the certain knowledge that, for all its protestations about liberty and justice for every American, it is the party of the few, of the rich of the interests, of the upper classes It is constitutionally incapable of looking out over the whole of America and, in the skillful purposeful manner of the Democrats, of caring for the legitimate needs of all ranks and callings It takes no broad view, it thinks no big thoughts, it has no warm heart. It is not creative in domestic affairs for the best it has been able to do throughout a generation of Democratic innovation and progress is first to shout 'Good God! No!" and then Me too!" It is not reliable in foreign affairs for it has repeatedly confused our friends and neighbors with its threats and boasts and changes of mind. It is not even what a conservative party is supposed to be sound and prudent and steady The Republicans, not the Democrats produced the wildest demagogue in American history and backed him with zeal The Republican party is indeed a minority, the Democrats conclude, in the range of its interests as well as in numbers It is a minority, that is to say, because it deserves to be a minority

If we can discount the natural excesses of admiration and abuse that are present in these pairs of images, we can come up with some fairly useful generalizations about the character of our two parties To speak of the character of a group of human beings as numerous and formless as an American party is an exercise in illusion, for it is to personalize the impersonal and individualize the col-

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are leaders of the community, and they know it Meanwhile back at table 16, things are more relaxed and less self-conscious Arguments are aired with abandon and settled (or forgotten) with a shrug Dress is more casual, salutes are more boisterous, jokes are more earthy They may be leaders too, but at the moment th

gether, but there is a difference in their styles That difference is caught vividly in the choice of beastly emblems that was made for all of us long ago the slightly ridiculous but tough and long lived Donkey—the perfect symbol of the rowdy Democrats, the majestic but ponderous Elephant—the perfect symbol of the respectable Republicans Can anyone imagine the Donkey as a Republican or the Elephant as a Democrat?

The last few pages have been fun for my readers, I hope but they take us only a little way toward a confident grasp of the real differences between the two parties, by which I mean differences in principle and program rather than in style or behavior differences that can be observed and then acted upon rationally by Americans who must go to the polls and choose between cand
of the two par
expect to feel
to a Republic
cratic President Americans who ask plaintively about these differences are really asking if their votes are likely to have any effect beyond throwing one set of rascals out and another set in W
of the candidates
particular election
wonder between democratic and the act of voting Republican? Does it matter at all whether a Democrat or Republican sits in the governor's chair in Connecticut or serves as senior senator from Illinois or represents the third congressional district of Oregon? Does it make any difference which party controls the House of

ism abroad The America of 1950—strong, secure, expansive, dynamic, bountiful, and in addition more just and humane, and in further addition more troubled—was essentially their creation The Republicans played their part, too but like the Democrats of 1900 they were not, certainly as a party, in the front ranks of the procession into the future It is up to each American to decide which America he would prefer to live in—not that he really has any choice but to live in the second—and thus to give the nod of history to the one party or the other The abstract choice, in any case, should not be impossible to make, for, despite their many common services and disservices to the American people, each of the parties has made its own distinctive contribution to the rise and splendor of the United States

Did it make any difference over the long course of history whether one voted Republican or Democrat? Surely it did

We can make short work of the second consideration, too by noting that in the years between 1896 and 1932 the Democrats even with Alton B Parker and John W Davis as their standard bearers, never lost the Bryan touch and never ceased to disturb the business community while the Republicans even with Theodore Roosevelt in the White House or George Norris in the Senate never lost the McKinley touch and almost never failed the business community when the going was rough Both parties as always, shilly-shallied grotesquely on some of the hottest issues of the time Both, as always, were reluctant to take clear-cut stands in defiance of any articulate group in the American electorate Yet a quick review of the roll calls in Congress during these years, bolstered by a quick comparison of the ideas and actions of Woodrow Wilson with those of the Republican President at either end of his incumbency, proves that the Democrats were even then a more reform minded party than were the [illegible]

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Table 10 Voting Records, 1933–1952

Acts or treaties	Party	House vote For	House vote Against	Senate vote For	Senate vote Against
Domestic issues					
T.V.A., 1933	Dem.	284	2	48	3
	Rep	17	89	14	17
	Other	5	—	1	—
N.R.A., 1933	Dem.	266	25	46	4
	Rep	53	50	10	20
	Other	4	—	1	—
A.A.A., 1933	Dem.	272	24	48	5
	Rep	39	73	14	15
	Other	4	1	1	—
Public Utilities, 1934	Dem	203	59	Voice vote	
	Rep	7	83		
	Other	9	0		
Social Security, 1935	Dem	287	13	60	1
	Rep	77	18	14	5
	Other	7	2	2	—
Rider to return control of relief to states, 1936	Dem.	Not before House		1	50
	Rep			13	4
	Other				3
Soil Conservation, 1936	Dem.	246	25	49	9
	Rep	20	64	5	11
	Other	1	8	2	—
Housing, 1937	Dem.	239	38	55	8
	Rep	24	48	6	8
	Other	12	—	3	—
Wages and Hours, 1938	Dem.	247	41	Voice vote	
	Rep	31	48		
	Other	12	—		
A.A.A., 1938	Dem.	243	54	53	17
	Rep	14	74	2	11
	Other	6	7	1	3
School Lunch P 1946	[illegible]m.	164	45	38	4
	[illegible]	110	56	11	17
				(crucial vote)	

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	Rep	14	74	2	11
	Other	6	7	1	3
School Lunch Program, 1946	Dem.	164	45	38	4
	Rep	110	56	11	17

(crucial vote

Table 10 Voting Records, 1933–1952 (*continued*)

Acts or treaties	Party	House vote For	House vote Against	Senate vote For	Senate vote Against
Taft Hartley, 1947	Dem	103	66	17	15
	Rep	217	12	37	2
	Other	—	1	—	—
Portal-to-Portal Pay, 1947 (unfavorable to labor)	Dem	116	50	18	22
	Rep	229	5	46	2
Rent Control, 1949	Dem	199	52	48	2
	Rep	61	101	5	31
				(crucial vote)	
Public Health, 1951	Dem.	Did not act		28	10
	Rep			10	25
Tidelands Oil, 1952	Dem.	94	70	24	24
	Rep	153	18	26	11
Foreign issues					
World Court, 1935	Dem.	No vote required		43	20
	Rep			9	14
	Other			—	2
Selective Service, 1940	Dem	211	33	50	17
	Rep	52	112	8	10
	Other	—	14	—	4
Lend Lease, 1941	Dem.	236	25	49	13
	Rep	24	135	10	17
	Other	—	5	1	1
Selective Service Extension, 1941	Dem.	182	65	38	16
	Rep	21	133	7	13
	Other	—	4	—	1
British Loan, 1946	Dem	157	32	29	15
	Rep	61	122	17	18
	Other	1	1	—	1
Greece-Turkey Aid, 1947	Dem.	160	13	32	7
	Rep	127	93	35	16
	Other	—	1	—	—

Table 10 Voting Records, 1933–1952 (*continued*)

Acts or treaties	Party	House vote For	House vote Against	Senate vote For	Senate vote Against
Foreign Assistance, 1948	Dem.	150	11	Voice vote	
	Rep	167	62		
	Other	—	2		
Selective Service, 1948	Dem.	136	31	Voice vote	
	Rep	123	103		
	Other	—	2		
Military Assistance, 1949	Dem.	172	24	Voice vote	
	Rep	51	84		
	Other	—	1		
UNRRA, 1949	Dem.	185	9	30	7
	Rep.	149	45	16	7
	Other	4	—	—	—
Trade Agreements Extension, 1949	Dem.	234	6	47	1
	Rep	84	63	15	18
Yugoslav Emergency Relief, 1950	Dem.	182	41	35	7
	Rep	43	100	25	14
Mutual Security, 1952	Dem.	168	20	39	1
	Rep	78	89	25	9

countries abroad? Which is more likely to take the next giant step toward the full *welfare state* by instituting a scheme of socialized medicine? Which is more likely, in the event of a [illegible] to use the pow[illegible] already holds[illegible]

The answer to all these questions is, for better or worse, the Democrats. They got us into our present commitments, and for some time to come [illegible]

[illegible] not go searching [illegible], in the image of a Wayne Morse or Hubert

Humphrey, for more Consider the votes in Table 11 on important issues to come up during Eisenhower's Presidency

I do not know how others may interpret these tables, but to me they prove that the Democrats and the Re-

Table 11 Voting Records, 1953–1959 (*continued*)

Acts or treaties	Party	House vote For	House vote Against	Senate vote For	Senate vote Against
Labor Reform Act, 1959	Dem. *	95	184	15	44
	Rep	134	17	32	2
		(vote on amendment to substitute Landrum Griffin bill for committee bill more favor able to labor)		(Vote on so-called Mc-Clellan amendment, bitterly opposed by organized labor)	
Fore gn issues					
Foreign Aid, 1953	Dem.	126	29	Voice vote	
	Rep	94	80		
	Other	1	—		
Refugee immigration (provid ng only limited entry of refugees) 1953	Dem.	88	111	24	22
	Rep	132	74	38	8
Mutual Security (providing additional fore gn aid) 1954	Dem.	144	43	29	7
	Rep	121	85	12	26
	Other	—	—	—	1
Reciprocal Trade Ex tension Act, 1958	Dem.	184	39	40	6
	Rep	133	59	32	12
Foreign Aid, 1959	Dem.	182	83	Voice vote	
	Rep	89	59		

* Of the 95 Democratic "antilabor" votes in the House 85 were cast by Southerners of the 15 such votes in the Senate 11 were cast by Southerners.

The first important vote in the session of 1960—on a bill in the Senate for substantial federal aid to education—found 54 in favor (46 Democrats and 8 Republicans) and 35 opposed (11 Democrats, of whom 10 were Southerners, and 24 Republicans)

and have not enjoyed the trip nearly so much They did not plan to take it in the first place, and besides they have had to swallow a lot of dust—an occupational hazard with which men who prefer to be conservatives must learn to live In any case it is not surprising that the Republican commitment to social security, aid to farmers, active diplomacy, or regulation of the air waves is clearly less enthusiastic than that of the Democrats, the men who got there first under Roosevelt and Truman This fact shows up in the administration of all those laws that Roosevelt left behind Barring the ever present factor of individual personality and character, it does make a difference to the television industry, the railroads, or the stock exchanges whether Democrats or Republicans have a majority in the independent commissions

The difference between Democrats and Republicans, which I find to be the conflict of liberalism (currently jaded) and conservatism (always opportunistic), might also be stated in this homespun way The Democrats are more willing to spend money than the Republicans, and thus more willing to raise taxes Many Democrats make a fetish of economy in government—the champion economizer after all is Senator Harry Byrd—and all profess to be as anxious as the Republicans to 'bring relief to the hard pressed taxpayer" especially in an election year Many Republicans play the game of logrolling as expertly and lavishly as the most carefree Democrats Yet the roll calls on money bills in Congress are evidence of somewhat different views in our two parties toward the public treasury Democrats are in a word, freer with public funds Republicans are in another word, tighter Conversely, Republicans are more alarmed at the prospect of inflation Democrats care about it, too, but not all that much They have many more loyal constituents than do the Republicans among those classes in our society that need a break in the form of unemployment checks, maternity benefits, and low rent housing They can therefore be expected to appropriate funds with less concern about where the money is to be found or what its distribution will do to the level of prices The Republicans as we know, find their most loyal constituents among those

Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the budgets and strategies of the last two Presidents has a talent for research or extrapolation that I cannot claim Partisan sniping at the President and the leadership in Congress goes on constantly; vague patterns of partisan favoritism toward one service or another emerge from time to time in the House or Senate They vanish, however, as quickly as they appeared and I think it fair to say that Democrats and Republicans can be counted on indefinitely to support a "respectable posture of defense" in general and all the services in particular

To these observations I might append two footnotes of which other perhaps more partisan, observers might wish to make something of a fuss Party differences over national defense could conceivably be wrenched from two differences in principle and concern I have already mentioned All other things being equal, a Democrat might be likely to vote with lighter heart than a Republican for an expanded military budget a Republican might worry a little longer over the inflationary implications of his vote All other things being equal a Republican might be more willing than a Democrat to withdraw from one of the alliances to which Roosevelt and Truman first committed us a Democrat might worry a little longer over the turmoil we might leave behind If these be differences, they are not large enough to get excited about.

The recent history of civil rights legislation finds the Democrats camped on both sides of the Republicans, who mill about in the middle in more than the usual confusion The most ardent proponents of strong federal action in this field are Democrats from the Northern cities where discrimination hurts and something can be done about it and the most ardent opponents are Democrats from the rural South, where discrimination is a way of life and nothing is going to be done about it if they can help it. One reason for the fact of federal inaction is the hog tied position of the federal government, and the reason for that as the world knows, is the obdurate power of the Southern Democrats in the House and Senate So long as that power exists and no concerted

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Almost everything that I have been saying about differences in style, temper, principle, and policy between the parties at the national level applies with equal, perhaps even stronger, force to the parties at the state or local level Wherever they are in a position to contend fairly equally for control of government, the Democrats, for all their fondness for the middle of the road are essentially a party of innovation and liberalism, which includes being liberal with other people s money, the Republicans for all their flashes of insurgency and urges to be "me-tooers," essentially a party of preservation and conservatism I cannot emphasize strongly enough that Democrats draw more votes than Republicans from people who want government to spend money on them Republicans more votes than Democrats from people who want government to leave them in possession of the money they have When it comes to a decisive vote in the legislatures of Illinois, Pennsylvania, or Washington on public housing, mental health clinics, or unemployment benefits the Democrats, minus the usual stragglers will move almost instinctively to one side, the Republicans minus the usual mavericks, will move even more instinctively to the other When it comes to a vote on programs to attract new industry or on tax relief in an election year they will all dance around happily in the center of the stage and make a mockery of my labored attempts to find the difference between them.

I trust that no one will read too much high principle into this liberal-conservative division in our party politics nor accuse me of celebrating one party as "the good guys" and scorning the other as 'the bad guys" Each party s characteristic ism is a practical tendency arising out of the interplay of interests not a doctrinal stance supported by a series of carefully reasoned principles One has only to study the activities of Congress in such matters as civil liberties and support of the arts to realize that neither Jefferson nor Burke stalks the halls of Congress and that the essential Democratic Republican division is between a visceral, self serving bread and butter liberalism and a visceral, self serving, bank-account conservatism.

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present in the birth of the party under Jefferson, Madison, Clinton, and Burr, the separation of the party under Douglas and Yancey, and the restoration of the party under Seymour and Pendleton the conflict of the urban, immigrant, Catholic, laboring North and the rural, white, Protestant, planting South Both the Democratic North and the Democratic South, to be sure, are much more complicated phenomena than that. The North has its own tensions between city and country, farm and factory, Irish and Italian, Protestant and Catholic, businessman and union worker, the South has come a long way from Jefferson or Calhoun or "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman. Yet the conflict is still there, unchanging in essence though changing in form, and it comes down in the end to a division between two powerful sections that hang together through what seems to be an outright miracle. It shows up in votes in Congress that deal with civil rights or labor, it ignites demonstrations on the floor at every national convention, it prevents final party unity on almost every issue except the organization of the House and Senate The gap between, let us say, Senators Byrd, Russell, and Talmadge on one hand and Senators Humphrey, Douglas, and Morse on the other is the widest in all our politics One must stand in awe of the forces—memory, habit, inertia, and vested interest, especially an interest in defeating the Republicans—that keep such men in the same party

It may be useful to digress for a few paragraphs on the subject of the South in American politics This is one subject, of course, on which we are all experts—with Professors Key and Heard leading the way[a]—so that much of what I have to say will be familiar to my readers Still, it never hurts to look old facts in the face, and these facts have never appeared as solid as they do today.

The eleven states of the old Confederacy—Virginia, North Carolina South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas—are far and away the most visible, uniform, and powerful sectional unit in American national politics In six other states on the border—Kentucky, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Missouri, and Oklahoma—

The South is a Democratic citadel because of tradition, vested interest, and the memory of the Civil War and Reconstruction Even today, except among immigrants from [illegible]

Negro In Key's authoritative words.

> In its grand outlines the politics of the South revolves around the position of the Negro It is at times interpreted as a politics of cotton, as a politics of free trade, as a politics of agrarian poverty, or as a politics of planter and plutocrat. Although such interpretations have a superficial validity, in the last analysis the major peculiarities of southern politics go back to the Negro Whatever phase of the southern political process one seeks to understand, sooner or later the trail of inquiry leads to the Negro [11]

To be short and blunt about this matter, the Democratic party exercises a near-monopoly of political allegiance in the South because this system appears to be the stoutest bulwark of white supremacy Whatever differences of class or interest or political principle may divide the white community of the South—and these differences are no less impressive than those that divide men in the North—they are muffled and suppressed and, as it were, sacrificed to unity in the transcendent interest of the whole community in "keeping the Negro in his place." Men carry on their struggles, which can be hot and vicious, within the party The party itself presents a united face to the rest of the country

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deus Stevens, and nine out of ten Southerners were brought up as Democrats. The revealing fact of the memorable

an adamant civil rights plank and an aggressive civil-rights candidate upon the convention.

One never knows what the leaders of the North will do in this matter, for the pressures to be a "truly liberal" party (and thus to write off most of the South) and the temptations to hold on to those 128 "sure" electoral votes (and thus to compromise with it) are both tremendous The Democrats were able to live fairly comfortably with their historic split in the days of Cleveland and Wilson Indeed, there were other splits, such as those rsonified in the enmity of Cleveland and Bryan, that t much deeper into the party's soul The coming-and-tying of Franklin Roosevelt changed all that. The New eal made loyal Democrats of the Negroes of the North, id the party had henceforth to hold their allegiance or sk defeat in a half-dozen key states The New Deal led ie way toward the welfare state, and the party had enceforth to pay special attention to the interests of the rban, working masses As the party of Northern Ne-roes, a civil rights party, it became an affront to the whole South As the party of organized labor, a high-ax, big-spending, reform-minded party, it became an affront to the conservative South, which is large and powerful. The affront, which Walter Reuther and Adam Clayton Powell would consider mutual, is now a fact of life in Congress In the jockeying and voting on foreign affairs, defense the farm problem, and the tariff (although the deviations on this count increase as the South grows more industrial), the Democrats are at least as united a party as the Republicans On issues like civil rights and regulation of labor, however, they can be counted on to split sharply The men from Texas and Tennessee, no longer straight-out Southern Democrats, do their best to hammer out workable compromises, and old Democratic hands in both North and South walk as softly as their principles and constituents will let them. But the split is a deep one that must become deeper with the passage of the years, and perhaps it will finally prove too much for both wings to bear The most important result of this split is the alliance, sometimes shadowy and other times quite substantial, into which it



again with each small shift in the prevailing wind. Vice-President Nixon has performed a political miracle in finding glad acceptance on both sides of the line Republican officeholders and organization men all over the country have submerged their aspirations, whether reactionary or progressive, in an attempt to stay together and thump the Democrats Yet no one who watches the Republicans go through their paces in Congress and at the nominating convention can fail to detect the two polar urges that separate most of them finally into the new guard and the old or, as I still prefer, into the Half-Breeds and the Stalwarts

In its present form the Republican split emerged in full view for the first time at the Philadelphia convention of 1940 Wendell Willkie, a man who had once been a delegate to the Democratic convention, was the force that turned two vague tendencies into two proud camps The choice of this undoubted Half Breed, who promised only to be a better, cleaner more efficient New Dealer than Franklin Roosevelt, over Robert A Taft, who promised to roll back history at least a couple of years, proved that both progressivism and conservatism were powerful forces in the party, and that any peace between them would always be shaky It proved too, although few persons recognized it at the time, that the Republicans would henceforth nominate candidates for the Presidency from the progressive wing or invite disaster I will have more to say on this point in the final chapter

Franklin Roosevelt made a reality of the New Economy in the years between 1933 and 1940 and thus contributed importantly to the split that became incarnate in the persons of Willkie and Taft. He and Harry Truman made a reality of the New Diplomacy in the years between 1940 and 1947 and thus contributed almost gleefully to the further split that became incarnate in the persons of Vandenberg and Bricker The liberal wing of [illegible]

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One reason for the present strength of the two major parties, by which I mean the remarkable capacity of each to keep its own peculiar split from widening disastrously, is the interesting modus vivendi under which Congress, during the past few generations, has become the special preserve of the conservatives in both parties and the Presidency the special preserve of the progressives. The causes of this situation lie deep in our institutions and habits, and they may well prevail for some time to come.

The first cause would surely be the dual electoral process outlined in the Constitution and the practices we have grafted onto it. We elect the Congress under a system that is gerrymandered by design and inertia in favor of rural, small state, and thus more conservative interests,[11] the President under a system that is gerrymandered by the exclusive use of the general ticket* in favor of urban, large state, and thus more progressive interests. A second cause is the practices of the parties, each of which has come in its own way to recognize that it must nominate a progressive candidate for the Presidency or hazard a crushing defeat, and each of which leaves the choice of candidates for the House and Senate entirely in the hands of state and local organizaions. A third is the independent habits of American oters, millions of whom seem quite prepared to choose ne kind of man to represent their more parochial interests on Capitol Hill and another to represent their broader interests in the White House. A fourth is what we might call "the imperatives of the Presidency." The very nature of the office, especially as our chosen instrument of diplomacy and defense, forces men who hold it to adopt a more active posture toward the world and its problems. However strong and sincere Senator Taft's urges toward isolation, it is hard to imagine his acting too much differently from Eisenhower if he had managed to win the Presidency.

A final cause, about which millions of words are writ-

*I refer to the fact that in each of the fifty states (and by the free choice of those states) the electoral vote goes in one lump to the presidential candidate with a plurality in the popular vote.



the presidential party of the Democrats, is always in a state of suspended animation until the next convention meets.) A President, whether Democratic or Republican, will temper many demands in his program to the mood of his allies in Congress The leaders of the party in Congress, who can feel the pressure of the White House, will try to suppress their conservative urges and honor the President's sensible requests. There is nonetheless a constant tension between the two Democratic parties, which is matched by a tension between the two Republican parties. Both are projections of those celebrated splits with which our parties have been living for generations.

Where then, is the heart of each party, and what is the distance between dead-center Republicanism and dead-center Democracy? The answer, I think, is that the heart of the Republican party is that position where Senator Taft pitched his famous camp—halfway between the standpattism of "the unreconstructed Old Guard" and the me-tooism of "the disguised New Dealers" The heart of the Democratic party at least in thirty nine states of the Union, is that position where Adlai Stevenson raised his famous standard—halfway between the aggressive reformism of "the laboristic liberals" and the moderate opportunism of the Texas brokers" Neither of these notable men could win through to the Presidency and thus put his mark indelibly on his party Taft, indeed, was too good a Republican even to win the nomination. Yet each in his own way and at his best moments came as close to being the beau ideal of his party as did any man in the postwar years

The distance between the well known positions of these two men on domestic and international affairs is a pretty accurate measure of the distance between the two parties and as reasonable an answer as one can make to those who still demand to know "the difference between the Democrats and the Republicans" The difference, I repeat is one of tendencies rather than principles In most parts of this country it comes down to a difference between an urban, working-class, new-stock, union-oriented

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. . . I shall be content. If they . . . es between the . . . forced to con-
*clude that, at least for them, there are none.**

*It may be of interest to note that, according to long range studies

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Since American politics appears to have a future, we must do what we can to look into that future and see what it may hold for us I propose to do this by peering down each of the two sights along which men are accustomed to take aim on the future prediction and prescription. I want to talk first about what is likely to happen on the American political scene in the next generation—between now and 1984—and second about what ought to happen My predictions will be those of a political historian who seeks to project present trends as objectively as he can into a future whose outlines are already visible My prescriptions will be those of a political scientist who perhaps finds more reason in the American party system than do many of his fellow citizens, and who is not generally disposed, certainly not in the real world of people and institutions to advocate abrupt changes in traditional ways of doing the public business I think it only fair to warn my readers, as if they could not guess that this chapter is the work of one who has a considerable if not exactly uncritical affection and admiration for the American political system.

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The immediate future of each party, then, appears in the form of a fascinating problem—to find a man who can capture the White House under its banner, if not necessarily in pursuit of all its principles Let us look at the process through which the Democrats and Republicans go about solving this problem, for in so doing we can learn a great deal about some of their common characteristics and special quirks I must assume that my readers already know something of the timetable and rituals of a presidential canvass—how we move step by step through the early stages of hat tossing, the pre-primary campaigns, the state primaries and conventions and committee meetings, the national conventions, the campaign, the plebiscite, the meeting of the electoral colleges, and so on to the last formality of counting the electoral vote and proclaiming the winner What I am interested in expounding are the rules that seem to govern each party's pursuit of glory, and that lead it to choose a certain type of man as its candidate for President and to shun many other types

First, let us take note of the tests that must be met by all persons who are recommended or recommend themselves for nomination by either of the major parties. Not all of them are polite or even reasonable, many of them smell of prejudice and vulgarity They are nonetheless the unwritten laws of presidential "availability," the best answers I can make to the hard questions What kind of man can be nominated for President of the United States? What kind of man cannot hope to be nominated? We are not dealing here with the qualities a man must have or cultivate if he is to be an effective President, but rather with the attributes he must have (many of them impossible to cultivate) before he has a right to think of being President at all We are no less concerned with those attributes—ethnic, religious, geographic, cultural, physical social—that disqualify a man no matter how eminent and talented a person he may be

Let me answer the questions in the form of a list that may not seem scientific but is loaded with fact.[3] If my reading of American history and understanding of Amer-

service,* less than thirty-five years old, a naturalized citizen, or an expatriate

Several things should be noted about this list. First, I have purposely left out a number of intangibles—moral repute, presence, eloquence, intelligence, moderation in views and tastes, willingness to run hard and to serve faithfully, the look of a winner—that are factors of decisive importance in transforming men who are merely available into serious contenders for nomination What I have tried to list are those self-evident qualifications and disqualifications which dry up the pool of available men to probably not more than a hundred Americans Second, any rule in the fourth and sixth categories can be broken with relative impunity by an eminent man who scores high on the other tests of availability Wendell Willkie was a corporation president, Adlai Stevenson was divorced, William Jennings Bryan was a twice-defeated candidate, Al Smith was a Catholic, yet they were nominated by hardheaded politicians who expected them to win None of them did win, be it remembered, and we may conclude that each of them lost a sizable number of votes by reason of his particular disqualification. Third, the rules do not apply quite so rigidly to aspirants for the Vice Presidency No man born and living in the South has been nominated for the Presidency on a major party ticket since Zachary Taylor in 1848, but the nomination of John Sparkman of Alabama in 1952 is proof that the Democrats will give second place on their ticket to a man ineligible for first. So, too, will the Republicans who certainly would not have nominated a man as young as Richard Nixon for President in 1952 but who gave freshness to their ticket by putting him up for Vice President One of these days we may even see a woman in second place on the ticket of a major party

I cannot guarantee the applicability of every item on this list, especially those in the middle categories, any longer than the next quarter-century Although many of our tastes and common expectations (and, alas, our

* Unless his name is Harry S. Truman, the one American to whom Amendment XXII does not apply

major official or legislator in our national, state, and city governments

In addition to these general considerations that apply almost equally to both parties, there are others of a special nature that apply forcefully to only one Each party, that is to say, has its own peculiar problem to solve in the course of its search for a winning candidate The problem of the Democrats stems from the fact, which I have documented in earlier chapters, that it is the majority party in the country, the problem of the Republicans from the related fact that it is the minority party The problem of each is made real and challenging by the further fact of the restlessness and independence of a sizable part of the American electorate All other things being equal, as I also said before, the Democrats should win every national election but "things" are far more likely to be "equal" in a congressional than in a presidential election. Political habits and allegiances mean much less than usual personalities and issues much more, in the race for the grand prize of American politics

The special problem of the Democratic party is to mobilize its majority, that is to nominate a candidate for the Presidency who can bring the party's own voters in droves to the polls If it is important to find a man who can appeal to the floaters in the center and to the deviants in the Republican party, it is even more important to find one who can hold together the squabbling legions of this amazing coalition, who can please both the United Automobile Workers and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Irish of Boston and the Jews of Brooklyn the professors and the professionals, the farmers and the factory workers, the white supremacists of Georgia and the Negroes of Harlem This is a task not easily accomplished especially now that the issue of civil rights is out in the open where it belongs Still the Democrats have a long history of successful group diplomacy, and a little thing like getting Herman Talmadge and Adam Clayton Powell to lie down together is not going to stand in the way of their quest for victory In the conventions of the future, as in those of the past,

in the four nominations of Roosevelt and in the cho[illegible] of Harry S Truman (instead [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] civil rights plank in the p[illegible] platform, put a strain on the unwritten laws,* but this strain was more than mitigated four years later by the nomination of Adlai Stevenson If anyone doubts the force of the laws I have been discussing, let him try to account in any other way for the choice in the convention of 1952 of this reluctant man not a Southerner but blessed with friends and relations in the South, not a "labor liberal" but owning a record of sympathy toward unions not a product of urban politics but able to find his way around Chicago, not a Catholic but also not a belligerent Protestant, not a Jew or a professor or a professional or a second generation immigrant but a man who counted such people among his closest colleagues, above all not a man who could be identified with any particular calling—and who had that aristocratic background and bearing for which the sweaty Democrats have a startling weakness If Stevenson had been from Missouri, had served a few years as senator or Secretary of Defense and had not been divorced, he would have been the almost perfect candidate of the modern Democratic party

The trouble was of course, that he ran head on into the perfect candidate of the Republican party—and in a year when, because of "Communism, Corruption, and Korea," all other things were far from being equal. The special problem of the Republicans is to nominate a candidate who can bring the party's voters to the polls and further, attract several million persons who normally vote Democratic or not at all A man like Eisenhower was designed in heaven for just such a purpose,* and surely there was something a little unreal about the savagery of the struggle between the Eisenhower and Taft

* Yet it was also a confirmation of the force of these laws. As Samuel Lubell has pointed out the "unanimity" of the Democratic leaders "in desiring to get rid of Truman was surpassed only by their inability to agree on anyone to take his place." a

the Democrats can be expected to come up with an experienced, appealing, available candidate who meets three special standards that are inherent in the nature and situation of the party.

First, he must be a loyal son of the party, a warrior with stars on his campaign ribbons and scars on his body The Democrats, who are perhaps more intense in their loyalty than the Republicans (and less pressed to woo the independent vote), are less likely to go running after generals and recent converts

Second, he must not be openly hostile to any one of the major elements in the great coalition Indeed, he should have proved himself to be at least an understanding listener to the woes of Negroes, states righters, union leaders, immigrants, and small farmers well before he betrays an interest in the Presidency

And third, he must not be too closely identified with any one of these elements As he cannot be a Southerner, *lest Northern liberals "wave the bloody shirt" at him,* so he should not be a man of the city machine, lest he remind the South of Al Smith As he cannot be a Pole, Italian, Jew, Negro, white supremacist, union official, or professional civil libertarian, so he should not be a Roman Catholic or an intellectual

To get down to cases, the Democrats, even when they were stuck fast in a minority position paid homage to the *unwritten laws of the party, which until 1936 were given* written support in the form of the famous two-thirds rule The nomination of every candidate from George B McClellan through John W Davis was the result of a grand exercise in self-conscious group diplomacy The nomination of Al Smith in 1928, however, was a violation of the unwritten laws of the old Democracy on at least three if not four counts,* and the new Democracy paid for it *in* the unprecedented loss of five states in the [illegible] The nomination of some- [illegible] I suspect, would have [illegible] ways of compromise [illegible]

* In those days the split of Wets and Drys presented an additional problem in group diplomacy to the Democratic professionals.

want it to be done, and in doing the job so colorfully and well it makes us, paradoxically, a more united people than we are at any other time in the normal course of American events Without it we would have a far different political system, without it we would find the challenge of nationhood far more difficult to meet. I go most of the way with Professor Binkley, who wonders "how else the electorate as a whole could be made so acutely aware of the very existence of our national state" and all the way with Walt Whitman, who wrote in *Democratic Vistas*, "I know nothing grander, better exercise, better digestion, more positive proof of the past, the triumphant result of faith in human kind, than a well-contested American national election"[4] The American people are rightly convinced that they have no more solemn task to perform and melodrama to enjoy than to elect their President every four years It is time they acknowledged the dominant role the parties play in making this crazy-quilt system of election work as well as it does—and that, on any realistic view of the candidates of the past thirty years, is very well indeed.

To return to our survey of the more distant future, it takes very little bravery or insight to predict that, barring a nuclear catastrophe that would leave anarchy or autocracy in its wake American politics in 1984 will look much like American politics in 1960 If, as I insisted at the end of Chapter II *these* parties were designed prescriptively to serve the purposes of *this* people under the terms of *this* Constitution" then there would have to be radical changes in our national character or in our form of government before we could expect any radical changes in our political system.

Such changes do not appear to be in the offing It is a popular and curiously comforting thing to say that we live in an age of transition even of revolution, but when have Americans not lived in such an age? If all the vast economic and social strides of the past fifty years brought only a few alterations in our political system, how can we expect the strides of the next generation to bring many more? Whatever new trends are under way in the

ndeed, if a new third party were to make such a showing in just one election, the major party closest to it would move awkwardly but effectively to absorb it.* I speak, of course, of (1) the white South, which, mobilized as an independent force in pursuit of its One Great Interest, might hold the balance of political power in the United States for a generation or more (2) the non-Communist, politically oriented left (centered principally on the C I O side of that weird combination the A F.L.-C.I O), which erupts from time to time with threats of a labor liberal party †—and then subsides into its normal state of being half master, half thrall of the Democratic party, and (3) the ultraconservative right which has the funds and the ideological commitment and would follow Douglas MacArthur to the ends of the earth if his trumpet would only give off a certain sound " In most other countries these groups each of which counts its potential supporters in the millions would have long since formed parties of consequence In this country they are doomed to frustration, a condition for which most of us, I suspect, are ready to give "much thanks "

Not every facet of our politics will remain exactly as it is today through the next quarter-century Several trends that are already visible will continue to run their ponderous course and may even run more strongly The shift from intensely sectional to loosely national politics is still under way The most obdurate pockets of one party ascendancy are slowly being eroded and now that Vermont has elected a Democrat to Congress who knows what other sanctuaries may give way under the pressure of this trend? It is being helped along paradoxically, by the continued activity of interest groups In the words of the

* Or even a threat of such a showing. The success of the leftward movement of the Democrats in 1936 (against Long and then Lemke) and 1948 (against Henry Wallace's Progressives) makes discouraging reading for those with hopes for a radical third party

† Walter Reuther in particular sounds the call that was sounded most clearly years ago by that half forgotten philosopher archy the cockroach

Announcer Do you think the time is ripe for launching a third national political party in America?
archy it is more than ripe it is rotten

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but of the long term political habits and preferences of the American people Since the early days of the New Deal these have been weighted noticeably in favor of the Democrats In the congressional elections of 1958, "things" were perhaps as equal' as they ever can be in our system, by which I mean that the pluses and minuses of such crosscutting forces as issues and personalities worked to cancel one another out and thus to leave each party in possession of its "normal" quota of voters, give or take a few hundred thousand The total vote for the House of Representatives in that election was Democrats, 25 641,104 Republicans, 19,763,773 Outside the South the count was 22,816 060 to 19,166,960 This may not be an exact measurement of the degree of Democratic ascendancy, but it is as exact as any we are likely to get. The question is whether it will continue to hold in the future

Several developments in both the demography and practices of our politics have led tough minded Republicans to predict their party's recapture of its old majority position within the next decade Among these are (1) the continuing rise in income, status, education, average age, and proportion of women to men * in the American electorate all of which are forces that are known or alleged to push voters gently toward the respectable conservatism of the Republicans, (2) the growth of the suburb as a steady counterpoise to the Democratic city and to the increasingly unpredictable country, (3) the mighty image of Dwight D Eisenhower as the Man of Peace, which could fog the mighty image of Franklin D Roosevelt as the Man of the People, (4) the growing habit of many Southerners of voting Republican in presidential elections, (5) the new determination of many leaders of business to engage actively in politics; (6) the increasing irritation of small businessmen, farmers, and other "plain people' over the intrusion of organized labor into politics, (7) the possibility that the organization of American workers into unions may have

* By 1980 according to the Census Bureau, eligible women (eligible for voting, that is, not for marriage) will exceed eligible men by

The more they get in with their financial resources, the greater interest they will stir up among the workers, and maybe it will help us get more workers in doing their real duty as citizens.

And when they get down to that contest between workers and big business we will do all right because there are a little more of us than there are of them [10]

[illegible]

dogged rise in Negro registration in the South promise welcome additions to the Democratic bulge—welcome, in any case, to the party in the North and West. The attack on rural over representation may yet succeed in correcting some of the most flagrant inequities, and the Democratic cities would stand to gain handsomely from any such successes [illegible]
in Congress th[illegible]
majority in the [illegible]
"subject to quick overturning by a counterswing in relatively few districts" [11] And surely, as Meany pointed out, the "masses" will outnumber the "classes" For all these reasons, I think it fair to predict that the Democrats, if they can keep from exploding will continue to ride high for several decades This does not mean, I repeat, that they can count on winning every election. It does mean that they enjoy enough of a head start over the Republicans to enable them to keep control of one or both houses of Congress and of well over half of our state governments for some time to come It should also enable them to capture the Presidency more often than not—unless, of course, chance continues to deal aces to the Republicans and only face cards to them.

This prediction of continued Democratic ascendancy is all very well, especially for the Democrats, but what about the question posed in the middle of the last paragraph Can the party of Humphrey, Stevenson, Walter, De Sapio, Lehman, Powell, Byrd, Truman Arvey, Butler Eastland, Talmadge, and Farley keep from exploding? To answer that question we must look again to the

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internationalism, reasonably firm pressure for civil rights and desegregation, and, whenever necessary, an aggressive bread and butter liberalism in behalf of the lower and lower middle income groups in both city and country.[11] Most of them are either mildly irritated or visibly outraged by the behavior of the Southerners in Congress. At the same time almost every Southern Democrat with whom I have talked insists that his state will not be forced one step faster toward desegregation than it chooses to move (if it chooses to move at all) and wonders out loud how long the ancient alliance will hold together. Well over half of them, in addition, express social and economic views indistinguishable from those of a Taft Republican in Shaker Heights or Sheboygan. As Fred Astaire puts it, "Something's got to give."

Three courses have been predicted or recommended for the Southern Democrats: (1) to form some kind of third party—the "real" Democracy—that would continue to govern each Southern state as it is presently governed, hold the balance of power in the electoral college, and make the best bargains it can with the most willing party of the moment in Congress, (2) to follow the path staked out in the presidential elections of 1952 and 1956 and divide along rough lines of class, interest, and principle into a genuine two-party pattern, first in states like Texas, Virginia, and Florida, eventually even in South Carolina and Mississippi, and (3) to hold on as long as possible in the present situation, certainly until the Northern Democrats force a final disruption by eliminating both the filibuster and the seniority rule, which they may never be able or willing to do. This course, incidentally, does not call for a perfect show of loyalty to the party. A little dabbling in walkouts from the convention, in presidential Republicanism, or in unpledged slates of electors would be permitted—but not too much.

As both a birthright and convinced Yankee, I am reluctant to predict which one of these courses the South will finally take. More than that, there seem to me to be immense obstacles strewn along all three of them. As to the first course, it defies every rule of American politics and assumes the existence of a massive unanimity of pur-



Democracy forced by an aggressive President and the Northern liberals in Congress (and aided, in various honest and devious ways, by the Republicans), and that it will be far more swift than most people would now expect. What form this new reality will take I simply cannot say The only thing of which I am certain is that it will serve the legitimate interests of Negroes in both the South and the North in at least a modest degree, or it, too, will crumble under pressure for yet another solution.

So much for prediction, for talk of what is likely to happen to the American political system Now for prescription, for talk of what ought to happen. We should begin, I suppose, by reeling off a long list of criticisms of our present system, for there is not much point in prescribing changes in one that is constructed sensibly and functioning properly But the words we would have to use—confusion timidity, apathy, self-interest, corruption, dishonesty, oligarchy, apathy, irresponsibility, vulgarity—are so familiar to persons with even a passing interest in our politics that I must beg to be excused from what could only be an exercise in boredom.

More than that, we would find ourselves talking not of what was wrong with American parties but with the American people, and, although that might be useful and amusing it is a subject for another book. In any case most criticisms of our politics that I have listened to over the years, like most criticisms of Congress, television, high schools, Hollywood, college football, and newspapers, are first of all judgments on the values and folkways of big, bourgeois democracy Consider, for example, the strictures leveled at that noisy, plebeian, maudlin, commercialized institution, the national party convention Are these not at bottom denunciations of the noisy, plebeian, maudlin, commercialized civilization within which it operates? Must we not concede that the convention reflects the values of the civilization because it is in fact so democratic in character and purpose? Can we expect to reform the one without first reforming the other? These questions, I think, answer themselves, and we are therefore left to deal with the parties as expres-

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words "The criticism most justly made of American major parties is not that they exhibit a tendency to be alike but rather that the moderate though significant differences between them are often too confused and ill defined to be readily understood" 11 The unwritten laws of American politics command that the differences between the parties be relatively few and modest, but it does not follow that these differences must also be obscure Let the parties compete for the millions of Americans in the "vital center" by offering alternatives that do not wrench our minds too violently in one direction or the other, but let them also offer us alternatives that can be clearly grasped. So runs the argument for more principle and clarity in our politics

I find this argument compelling. As a dogged admirer of the American political system, I would be most reluctant to have it overhauled boldly or tampered with carelessly in pursuit of the proposition that the parties should have ideas and the ideas should have consequences Yet I cannot see that a sustained effort by the leaders of both parties to formulate more consistent programs based on more sharply defined principles, and to clarify the differences between one program and the other, would corrupt the solid virtues of that system in any way Let the Democratic Advisory Council flourish and be taken up by the leaders of the party in Congress Let the Republican Committee on Program and Progress be made a permanent adjunct of the National Committee And let each send forth a continuing series of reports that seek to make clear just what the party stands for Let it also, in words more moderate and elevated than those used in the spiteful sputtering meaningless debate carried on over the years between the chairmen of the national committees, make clear its own version of how it differs from the other

Those differences must boil down in the end to a modest but meaningful confrontation of liberalism and conservatism. The confrontation already exists more sharply than most people seem to realize, as I tried to show in Chapter IV, and it is largely a question now of convincing our politicians, not so much to undertake the conscious

ulation of labor and industry, aid to underdeveloped countries, subsidies to agriculture, and benefits to the underprivileged, a party more conservative than liberal, having its center of gravity in the business community, and a party more liberal than conservative, having its center of gravity in the lower and lower-middle classes, could contest for the stakes of power on a fairly equal basis. They could, moreover, give us the range of political choice—not too broad but broader than we have had—we need and deserve as citizens of a country that has some large problems to solve. Most of us do not want more principle and clarity in our two-party system at the expense of the precious national and social unity to which the parties have been major contributors. Still, we may already be well launched on the way to a more clear-cut system, and I fail to detect any new rips in the social fabric that have been caused by the pulling and hauling of the parties. Indeed, I am confident that we can have it both ways: a party system that continues to work in its strange offhanded way for unity of Americans of every section, class, and race and yet gives them a sharper choice of alternatives than it has given in the past.

That sharper choice will have to be reflected in a keener show of *discipline* in the two houses of Congress, say the critics of our present flabby system, or all our efforts to have a politics of at least modest principle and perceptible clarity will come to nothing. The Democratic Advisory Council and the Republican Committee on Program and Progress will swat at each other with pillows stuffed with platitudes, the mavericks in Congress will continue to pay nothing in the coin of loyalty for the privilege of wearing a party's badge, and the air will continue to be filled with pleas of professors, journalists, and just plain voters for "parties that stand for something different." We must have a more developed party consciousness among our legislators, more bite to the sanctions that can be imposed by the leadership upon recalcitrants, more protection for the man who defies a local interest or national pressure group to support his party's stand on a crucial issue, more respect in our folkways for

public affairs, for all that it plans to do, for all that it might have foreseen, for the leadership it provides, for the acts of all of its agents, and for what it says as well as for what it does.

Party responsibility includes the responsibility of the opposition party, also broadly defined, for the conduct of its opposition, for the management of public discussion, for the development of alternative policies and programs, for the bipartisan policies which it supports, for its failures and successes in developing the issues of public policy, and for its leadership of public opinion.[18]

From these premises the committee took off on a flight to London if not to Utopia, propelling their cargo of hopes along with a burst of suggestions, some precise and some vague, about the size and timing of national conventions, the creation of party councils, the stimulation of regional (as opposed to state and local) organizations, the formulation of more positive platforms, the tightening of leadership and organization in Congress, the restriction of the free play of the filibuster and the seniority rule, the encouragement of closed primaries, and the overhauling of the presidential electoral system.

I will spare my readers the endless details of the debate that followed hard upon the publication of this report and confine myself to two observations. First, the committee underestimated the amount of cohesion and responsibility that already exists in our government and framed too many of its proposals in an inspirational rather than institutional form. Second, many critics of the committee overestimated the amount of unwonted change that would supposedly take place in our political system if its plan of action were carried through and gave the report small credit for its modesty and moderation. In general, the committee did an able, conscientious job of pointing out the road that we may yet travel to more disciplined and responsible parties, and I would recommend it, if not as a blueprint certainly as a string of guideposts, to all who are interested in moving toward stronger party government.

My own view is that we could indeed use another three tablespoons of discipline and five pinches of responsibility

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tested system of electing the President,[21] whether in the interest of an allegedly more just and accurate measurement of popular sentiment or an allegedly more clear-cut and responsible two-party system The progressive character of the Presidency might be undercut by the elimination of the general ticket system, and that is a change we might live to regret When Congress is no longer elected on a system gerrymandered in favor of the rural interests it may be proper to elect the President on a system no longer gerrymandered in favor of the urban interests. Until then we would do well to keep the present balance between the two great branches of our government, comforting ourselves with the thought that one good gerrymander deserves another [22]

To retreat for a moment from prescription to prediction, I think we need have little fear that any progress we make toward responsible party government will change the familiar pattern of American politics to any pronounced degree What all this talk of responsibility comes down to is a hope—a hope, incidentally, that springs most naturally in liberal breasts—that each of our parties will present a more united front to the country in congressional elections and that successful candidates will value considerations of party higher than those of constituency in making their decisions in Congress Any trend in this direction will certainly move only glacially against the vast accumulation of habits, values, and institutions that support our present pattern of politics Even if these were to disintegrate and form themselves into a different pattern, we would still be dealing with a country of common principles and varied interests. The blessed fact of the American consensus forces the parties to share many of the same ideas, the blessed fact of American diversity forces them to be selective about the ideas they may wish to emphasize at any one time or in any one place As Julius Turner argued cogently, "Only a Democrat who rejects a part of the Fair Deal can carry Kansas and only a Republican who moderates the Republican platform can carry Massachusetts" [23] This situation may ... ble those who like to have their politics

American democracy will continue to be noted for the coolness with which most citizens watch it or play it In the heat of a national campaign we may seem anything but cool, yet as Henry Jones Ford remarked many years ago "The truth is that a remarkable nonchalance underlies the sound and fury of partisan politics" [34]

Although this may seem heretical to many well meaning Americans, I think we should be more content with the nonchalance we have hitherto demonstrated, especially as it displays itself in the turnout in national elections It would be heartening to have all disabilities and difficulties removed so that the nationwide figure could rise to its apparently natural level of 72 to 78 per cent,[35] but I see no point in pushing furiously for a large turnout simply for the sake of a large turnout. This, in my opinion, is exactly what the Get-out the-Vote-ers have been doing, and I have yet to learn how it would make any practical difference to the American future whether the turnout in the next election were 50, 60, 70, 80, or 90 per cent. As free men we all ought to vote, or have legitimate, principled reasons for not voting; but as free men we all ought to do a lot of things more faithfully and virtuously than we do them at present, and voting may stand about tenth in the list of the priorities of improved social behavior for millions of Americans

I am not writing in defense of apathy That defense has already been made with wit and persuasion by a number of scholars and journalists more concerned than I to bait or belabor the merchants of mass democracy [36] I want only to point to three things generally overlooked in the quadrennial hue and cry over our performance as an electorate First, what men call "apathy" has many faces not all of them evil, not all of them apathetic A collective indifference to politics can be a major bulwark against extremism and autocracy,[37] individual withdrawal may be as meaningful and democratic an act for one man as a zealous vote is for another For these and other reasons, it is yet to be proved that a nation's voting record is a reliable indication of the health of its democracy "A realistic view of the behavior of democracies," Francis Wilson writes, "leads one toward the belief that

quality of the electorate would decline, and with it the level of the campaign, the Democrats would win their biggest victory in history, the enthusiasm of many well-meaning people for getting out the vote would grow cold and die. This is not to be construed as advice to one party or the other, but to be taken simply as an observation grounded on some of the hard facts of political life in the United States. One of those facts, which has been demonstrated again and again in elections, is that the Democrats must work harder than the Republicans to turn out their own habitual and potential voters. Since they usually do, they usually win. If I were a Republican party worker, I would shun the broad if patriotic advice of the American Heritage Foundation and work to get out only my own habitual and potential voters.

When all our hopes for the reform of American politics have been laid out and picked over, the stubborn fact remains that the pattern we have known in the recent past is likely to persist in the foreseeable future. Even the breakup of the Solid South is not going to alter the main features of that pattern. They are now so firmly rooted in the values, institutions, and circumstances of the American people that nothing short of a profound revolution in our way of life, whether generated from within or imposed from without, would wrench them loose. We may well come in time to a sharper line of ideological division between the two parties, to a new age of Republican ascendancy, to real two-party competition in every state of the Union, even to stronger party government in Congress; yet these would only be shifts in emphasis within the present pattern of politics. That pattern strikes me as durable.

It also strikes me as admirable, which is to say that the durability of the politics of American democracy should be a cause of modest rejoicing rather than of gnawing frustration.[30] It may be that such a politics will have no place in the fanciful world of 2060—painless, antiseptic, automatic, and abundant—we have been promised by our seers; but for the time being it can serve the peculiar needs of American democracy better than

ment or the importance of reaching into outer space, to which partisan considerations are likely to bring only ill-suggested answers. All partisanship must be political, but not all politics must be partisan." In the American system, I repeat, there are many ways to form and express majority sentiment, and even the best friends of parties would not presume to assert a monopoly of this process. Finally, it must be recognized that free government reaches only part of the way into the lives of the people who support it. There are things it cannot do by right or might or nature, and we must remember not to expect too much of it. Remembering that, we will also remember not to expect too much of politics, which exists, after all, as an adjunct of government. Politics is only one of several mighty forces that made America what it is today, it is only one of the forces that will make America what it is in 1984 or 2000 or 2060.

Let us ask more of our politics than we have hitherto received but let us not make the mistake of asking more than it can give. Our party system will continue to serve us well as long as we keep the old definition firmly in mind. Politics is the art of the possible. Whatever America finds necessary to do in the years to come, the politics of American democracy will surely make possible.

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Republican Isolationist Vote in Congress
Per Cent "No" of Total Republican Votes

Region	Selective Service	Lend Lease	Marshall Plan	Foreign aid Bills			
				1952	1953	1954	1955
Midwest	98	97	47	76	70	69	65
East	70	68	4	24	13	13	19
Pacific	60	80	4	30	18	20	19
All Republicans	89	86	25	53	40	40	40

From *Revolt of the Moderates*, 98, by permission of the publisher Harper and Brothers

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